

Tukaram Gatha

तुकाराम गाथा

Original Marathi with English translation, a plain-language reading, and an explanation of what each abhanga means

Volume 5: Gatha 2001-2500 - 500 abhangas

About This Edition

This reading edition brings together four layers for every abhanga: the original Marathi, an English translation, a rendering in plain words, and a short explanation of its meaning.

The English layers are devotional reading aids. No translation can fully carry Tukaram's Marathi music, wordplay, cultural setting, or spiritual force. Readers are encouraged to return to the original and to consult Marathi teachers and established scholarly editions.

Marathi source: Tukaram Gatha on Marathi Wikisource. The source dataset identifies the Marathi text as public domain. English reading layers are from the Ananta Satsang online edition.

Editorial note: We ask forgiveness for any inaccuracies in rendering Tukaram Maharaj's original Marathi.

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GATHA 2001

Sacred Stories

Mythology, the Name cuts the bonds

मराठी मूळ

रामें स्नानसंध्या केलें क्रियाकर्म । त्याचा भवश्रम निवारला ॥१॥
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ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Rama performed the rituals of bathing, prayer, and sacred action; through these, His worldly bondage was destroyed. Others who struggled with schemes and efforts gained nothing; empty noise without the true key avails nothing.

Those who placed their trust in Rama's name cut through the bonds of worldly existence. Says Tuka, the faithful have made even death and time bow low through the chanting of the name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Rama himself did the bathing, the prayers, the rites. By them his weariness of the world was taken away. Others stayed far off, busy with schemes and struggle. It was empty noise, with the real key missing. Those who held trust in Rama's name cut through the bonds of this world. Tuka says: the faithful have made death and time bow low, just by singing the Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram contrasts two ways of meeting the labor of life. He points to Rama doing the rituals, but the weight is shifted onto trust: rites without the true key are only busywork and noise, and the people lost in scheming gained nothing from them. The bonds of worldly existence are cut not by effort but by faith placed in Rama's name. His final claim is the sharp one: through the simple chanting of the Name, ordinary devotees have humbled even death and time itself.

GATHA 2002

The Saints

Saints, devotion the crown jewel

मराठी मूळ

वैष्णवांची कीर्ती गाइली पुराणीं । साही अठरांजणीं चहूं वेदीं ॥१॥
 ऐसे कोणी दावा ग्रंथांचे वाचक । कर्मठ धामिनक पुण्यशील ॥२॥
 आदिनाथ शंकर नारद मुनेश्वर । शुका ऐसा थोर आणि नही ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने मुगुटमणी हे भक्ति । आणीक विश्रान्ति अरतिया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The glory of the Vaishnavas is sung in the Puranas, in all eighteen texts, in the four Vedas. Let any scholar of scriptures, any ritualist or pious soul, show otherwise.

The primordial Shiva, Narada the sage, and great Shuka have no superior. Says Tuka, devotion is the crown jewel; for the restless soul, there is no other resting place.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The glory of the Vaishnavas is sung in the Puranas, in all eighteen of them, and in the four Vedas. Let any reader of the scriptures, any ritualist, any pious man, point to something higher. The first Lord Shankara, Narada the sage, and great Shuka: none is greater than these. Tuka says: devotion is the crown jewel. For the restless soul there is no other resting place.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram appeals to the whole weight of scripture, the eighteen Puranas and the four Vedas, to back a single claim, and then dares any scholar or ritualist to top it. He names Shiva, Narada, and Shuka as the highest of the high, devotees all. The point lands in the last line: of everything the texts hold up, devotion is the crown jewel, and for a heart that cannot stop wandering it is the one place that gives rest.

GATHA 2003

Autobiography

Autobiography, plea for forgiveness

मराठी मूळ

बोलिलों जैसैं बोलविलें देवें । माझें तुम्हां ठावें जातिकुळ ॥1॥
 करा क्षमा कांहीं नका धरुं कोप । संत मायबाप दीनावरि ॥ध्रु॥
 वाचेचा चाळक जाला दावी वर्म । उचित ते धर्म मजपुढें ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे घडे अपराध नेणतां । द्यावा मज आतां ठाव पायीं ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have spoken as God moved me to speak; you know my caste and lineage. Forgive me; do not hold anger in your minds.

Saints are like parents to the helpless. The one who animates my tongue has shown me the truth; this is the proper dharma before me.

Says Tuka, offenses happen unknowingly; grant me a place at Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I spoke only as God moved me to speak. You know my caste and my family. Forgive me, do not hold anger against me. The saints are mother and father to the lowly. The one who moves my tongue has shown me the truth. This is the right path set before me. Tuka says: offenses happen without my knowing. Now give me a place at your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram steps forward as himself, low-born and aware that his listeners know it, and asks not to be judged for it. He insists his words are not his own boast but God speaking through him, so any fault in them is honest, not arrogant. He leans on the saints as parents who shelter the helpless, and on the one who animates his tongue as the source of whatever truth he has shown. The poem closes as a plain plea: errors slip out unknowingly, so grant me, anyway, a place at your feet.

GATHA 2004

The Saints

Saints, the servant at their door

मराठी मूळ

संतांचे घरींचा दास मी कामारी । दारीं परोपरीं लोळतसें ॥१॥
 चरणींचे रज लागती अंगांस । तेण बेताळीस उद्धरती ॥२॥
 उच्छिष्ट हें जमा करुनि पत्रावळी । घालीन कवळी मुखामाजी ॥३॥ ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे मी आणीक विचार । नेणें हे चि सार मानीतसें ॥३॥ ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am a servant and laborer in the household of the saints, rolling at their door in every manner. The dust of their feet touches my body, and by that dust, forty-two generations are purified.

I gather their leftover food on leaf-plates and place each morsel in my mouth. Says Tuka, I know no other way; this alone I hold as the highest truth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am a servant, a laborer, in the house of the saints. I roll about at their door in every way. The dust of their feet touches my body. By that dust, forty-two generations are lifted up. I gather their leftover food from the leaf-plates. I put each morsel into my mouth. Tuka says: I know no other plan. This alone I hold as the heart of everything.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram takes the lowest possible place on purpose, a hired drudge rolling in the dirt at the saints' threshold. The images are deliberately humbling: foot-dust on his skin, leftover scraps from their leaf-plates eaten as prasad. But the lowliness is the whole power of it, since that very dust is said to redeem forty-two generations of his line. He ends by refusing all cleverness: he knows no other method, and treats this surrender to the company of saints as the single essential thing.

GATHA 2005

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, against craving

मराठी मूळ

एक शेरा अन्ना चाड । येर वाउगी बडबड ॥1॥
 कां रे तृष्णा वाढविसी । बांधवूनि मोहपाशीं ॥ध्रु॥
 ओठ हात तुझा जागा । येर सिणसी वाउगा ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे श्रम । एक विसरतां राम ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One measure of grain is all you need; everything else is empty chatter. Why do you keep increasing your craving, binding yourself in the noose of delusion? Your lips and hands are active enough; the rest is needless exertion.

Says Tuka, the only real loss is forgetting Rama.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One measure of grain is all you need. The rest is empty noise. Why do you keep swelling your craving, tying yourself in the noose of attachment? Your own lips and hands can do the work. The rest is wearing yourself out for nothing. Tuka says: there is only one real loss, and that is forgetting Rama.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram cuts the question of need down to almost nothing: one measure of grain, and everything piled on top of that is just chatter. He asks the listener directly why he keeps feeding his own craving when craving is the very rope of attachment that binds him. The body has hands and a mouth enough to meet real needs; the extra striving is self-inflicted exhaustion. He saves the only loss worth fearing for the end: not poverty, not lack, but forgetting Rama.

GATHA 2006

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the body slipping away

मराठी मूळ

आलें धरायच पेट । पुढें मागुतें न भेटे ॥1॥
 होसी फजीती वरपडा । लक्ष चौःयासीचे वेढां ॥ध्रु॥
 नाहीं कोणांचा सांगात । दुःख भोगितां आघात ॥2॥
 एका पाउलाची वाट । कोणां सांगावा बोभाट ॥3॥
 जुंतिजेसी घाणां । नाहीं मारित्या करुणा ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे हित पाहें । जोंवरि हें हातीं आहे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You have been given a body to hold; ahead, you will not get it again. You will be exposed and humiliated, trapped in the cycle of eighty-four hundred thousand births.

No one will accompany you there; you will suffer blows of misery alone. The path is just one step away; whom will you cry to then? You will be yoked to the mill of karma with no mercy from the one who drives it.

Says Tuka, look to your own welfare while it is still in your hands.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have been given a body to hold. You will not get it back again later. You will be shamed and disgraced, trapped in the round of eighty-four hundred thousand births. No one there will keep you company. You will suffer the blows of sorrow alone. The path ahead is only one step away. To whom will you cry out then? You will be yoked to the oil-press of karma. The one driving it shows no mercy. Tuka says: look to your own good, while it is still in your hands.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses on the listener the rare, perishable thing he is holding: a human body, given once and not handed back if it slips away. He spells out the alternative without softening it, the long round of countless births, suffered without a single companion, with the next plunge always just one step off. The image of being yoked to the merciless oil-press names karma as a grinding mechanism that does not pity. The point is urgency, not despair: act for your own welfare now, while the chance is literally in your hands.

GATHA 2007

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, seize the human birth

मराठी मूळ

लाभ जाला बहुतां दिसीं । लाहो करा पुढें नासी । मनुष्यदेहा ऐसी । उत्तमजोडी जोडिली ॥१॥
 घेई हरिनाम सादरें । भरा सुखाचीं भांडारें । जालिया व्यापारें । लाहो हेवा जोडीचा ॥२॥
 घेउनि माप हातीं । काळ मोवी दिवस राती । चोर लाग घेती । पुढें तैसें पळावें ॥३॥
 हित सावकासें । ह्मणे करीन तें पिसें । हातीं काय ऐसें । तुका ह्मणे नेणसी ॥३॥ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

After a long time, a great gain has come; seize the profit before it perishes. A human body is the supreme fortune one can attain.

Take the name of Hari with reverence; fill the storehouse of happiness. Through this trade, gain the profit and the joy of true investment.

Time is measuring out your days and nights with its own yardstick; thieves are giving chase, so you must run ahead. Says Tuka, the fool who says he will attend to his welfare later does not know what is truly in his hands.

IN PLAIN WORDS

After a long time a great profit has come. Take it quickly, before it spoils. A human body is the finest fortune you can ever gain. Take Hari's name with care. Fill your storehouses with happiness. Make the trade, and win the profit, win the gain of a lifetime. Time holds the measuring-cup in its hand. It measures out your days and nights. Thieves are after you. So run on ahead. Tuka says: the fool who says he will see to his good later does not know what he is holding in his hand.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram talks the language of trade and urgency. The human birth is a rare windfall that has finally come round, and like fresh goods it will spoil if you sit on it. The profitable trade is taking Hari's name and stocking the storehouse of happiness with it. He sharpens the pressure with two images: Time standing there ladling out your days with a measuring-cup, and thieves chasing you so you must keep moving. The closing scorn is aimed at procrastination itself, the man who promises to attend to his soul later and has no idea what treasure is already in his grip.

GATHA 2008

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the meeting of eyes

मराठी मूळ

सुखाचें ओतलें । दिसे श्रीमुख चांगलें ॥१॥
 मनंधरिला अभिळास । मिठी घातली पायांस ॥२॥
 होतां दृष्टादृष्टी । तापगेला उठाउठी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जाला । लाभें लाभ दुणावला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The blessed face shines as though cast in the mold of joy. The mind has seized upon its desire and clasped His feet in a firm embrace.

The moment our eyes met, all suffering left at once. Says Tuka, gain has doubled upon gain.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It is as if joy itself were poured into a mold. So beautiful is the sacred face. My mind seized its longing. It threw its arms around his feet. The moment our eyes met, the fever lifted at once. Tuka says: it has happened. Gain has doubled upon gain.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing the instant of darshan, the sight of God's face. He says that face looks as though joy itself had been cast into a mold, and at the sight his mind grabs hold of its long desire and clasps the feet. The change is immediate: the moment their eyes meet, the heat of his suffering simply lifts. He ends in plain astonishment that it has actually happened, and that the gain keeps multiplying, gain doubling upon gain.

GATHA 2009

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the bottomless spring

मराठी मूळ

झरा लागला सुखाचा । ऐसा मापारी कइंचा ॥१॥
 जो हें माप तोंडें धरी । सळे जाली ते आवरी ॥ध्रु॥
 जाले बहु काळ । कोणा नाहीं ऐसें बळ ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे तळ । नाहीं पाहेसा सकळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A spring of happiness has burst forth; where was such abundance before? Whoever puts this vessel to their lips draws in the rushing waters. Many ages have passed, yet no one has found such power.

Says Tuka, no one can see the bottom of this depth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A spring of happiness has burst open. Where was such fullness before? Whoever sets this measure to their lips drinks in the rushing water. Long ages have passed, and no one has had such power. Tuka says: no one can see the bottom of this depth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming a joy that has broken open in him like a spring and overflows every measure. He says it has no parallel in all the ages that came before, and no one ever held a power like this. The vessel that tries to take it in is simply flooded. The closing line sets the limit: this happiness has no floor you can reach, no bottom you can see, so it can never be exhausted or fully described.

GATHA 2010

The Necessity of Experience

Inwardness, God already knows

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी बोलों तें तुज कळे । एक दोहीं ठायीं खेळे ॥१॥
 काय परिहाराचें काम । जाणें अंतरीचें राम ॥ध्रु॥
 कळोनियां काय चाड । माझी लोकांसी बडबड ॥२॥
 कारण सर्वें एका । अवघें आहे ह्मणे तुका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What we say, You understand; the One plays in both places. What need is there for explanation? Rama knows the innermost secret.

When You already know, what is the point of my chatter before the world? Says Tuka, the cause is one, and everything is contained in it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What we say, You understand. The One plays in both places. What is the use of explaining? Rama knows what is inside the heart. When You already know, what good is my chatter before the world? Tuka says: the cause is one, and everything rests in it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is dropping the need to perform his faith for an audience. God already understands every word, because the same One lives in him and in God alike. So explanations are pointless: Rama reads the heart directly, and noisy talk before other people adds nothing. The poem lands on a quiet trust that one source holds everything, which makes the inner knowing enough and the public show unnecessary.

GATHA 2011

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the burden on God

मराठी मूळ

उमटे तें ठायीं । तुझे निरोपावें पायीं ॥१॥
 आह्मीं करावें चिंतन । तुझें नामसंकीर्तन ॥२॥
 भोजन भोजनाच्या काळीं । मागों करुनियां आळी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे माथां । भार तुझ्या पंढरिनाथा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whatever arises, let it be placed at Your feet. Our task is to meditate upon You and chant Your name.

At mealtimes, we will ask with loving insistence. Says Tuka, the burden rests upon Your head, O Lord of Pandhari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever arises, let it be laid at Your feet. Our task is to remember You and to chant Your name. At mealtimes we will ask with loving insistence. Tuka says: the burden is on Your head, O Lord of Pandhari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram divides the work between himself and God and keeps almost nothing for himself. His only job is to remember and to sing the Name; everything that comes up he places at God's feet. Even bodily needs, like food, he leaves to God, asking with a child's stubborn affection. The last line states the whole arrangement plainly: the weight of his life now rests on Panduranga's head, not his own.

GATHA 2012

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, holding God to His word

मराठी मूळ

केला पण सांडी । ऐसियासी ह्यणती लंडी ॥1॥
 आतां पाहा विचारून । समर्थासी बोले कोण ॥ध्रु॥
 आपला निवाड। आपणें चि करितां गोड ॥2॥
 तुम्हीं आम्हीं देवा । बोलिला बोल सिद्धी न्यावा ॥3॥
 आसे धुरे उणें । मार्गे सरे तुका ह्यणे॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who makes a promise and then abandons it is called a coward. Now look carefully: who will argue with the Capable One? Making a judgment in one's own favor is always pleasant.

Says Tuka, O God, You and we together must bring the spoken word to completion. Whoever falls short at the front line is pushed to the rear.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One who makes a promise and then drops it is called a coward. Now think it over: who can argue with the Capable One? Judging a case in your own favor is always sweet. You and we together, O God, must carry the spoken word to its end. Tuka says: whoever falls short at the front is pushed to the back.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pressing God to honor His own promise to save His devotees. He frames it as a matter of honor: to make a pledge and abandon it is cowardice, and it is too easy to rule in your own favor. He admits no one can simply out-argue the Almighty, so he calls it a shared obligation instead, a word that God and devotee must see through together. The blunt closing image warns that the one who fails to deliver is the one shamed, turning God's reputation into the stake.

GATHA 2013

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the bond sealed in blood

मराठी मूळ

न व्हावें तें जालें । तुम्हां आम्हांसी लागलें ॥1॥
 आतां हालमाकलमें । भांडोनियां काढूं वर्मे ॥ध्रु॥
 पाटोळ्यासर्वेसाठी। दिली रगतएची गांठी ॥2॥
 तुका ह्यणे हरी । आणूनियां करिन सरी ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What should not have happened has happened, and it now involves both You and me. Now let us argue it out and bring the truth to light.

This bond was sealed with blood from the very start. Says Tuka, O Hari, I will bring You to account and settle this matter.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What should not have happened has happened, and it now ties You and me together. Now let us quarrel it out and bring the truth to light. From the very start this bond was sealed with blood. Tuka says: O Hari, I will bring You to account and make the reckoning even.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as one bound to God by a tie he treats as unbreakable. He admits something has happened that perhaps should not have, but it has knit God and himself together, and he refuses to let it stay unresolved. He insists on a frank confrontation to settle what is true between them. Calling the bond sealed in blood, he claims the right to hold Hari accountable and to square the account fully, the boldness of a devotee who treats love as a binding contract.

GATHA 2014

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, demanding the proof

मराठी मूळ

पतितमिरासी । ते म्यां धरिला जीवेंसी ॥१॥
 आतां बिळ्या सांग कोण । ग्वाही तुझें माझें मन ॥२॥
 पावणांचा ठसा । दावीं मज तुझा कैसा ॥३॥
 वाव तुका ह्मणे जालें । रोख पाहिजे दाविलें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have seized hold of the title Purifier of the Fallen with my very life. Now tell me, who will be the witness? Your chitta and mine both know the truth.

Show me the mark of those You have truly saved. Says Tuka, promises have been made; now let the payment be shown in full.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have seized the title Purifier of the Fallen and held it with my life. Now tell me, who will be the witness? Your heart and mine both know the truth. Show me the mark of those You have truly saved. Tuka says: the promises have been made; now let the payment be shown in full.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays claim to God's own name, Purifier of the Fallen, and grips it as his only security, since he counts himself among the fallen. He asks who will witness the case and answers it himself: God's heart and his own both already know the truth. Then he presses for evidence, the visible mark of the truly rescued, and asks to see it on

himself. The poem closes by treating salvation as a debt God has promised, and demands that the payment now be made good in full.

GATHA 2015

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the evasive creditor

मराठी मूळ

करितां वेरझारा । उभा न राहासी वेव्हारा ॥१॥
 हे तों झोंडाईचे चाळे । काय पोटीं तें न कळे ॥२॥
 आरगुणी मुग । बैसलासी जैसा बग ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे किती । बुडविलीं आळवितीं ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the rounds of exchange come, You do not stay to settle the account. These are just evasive games; can I not see what is really in Your belly? You sit motionless, watching like a crane.

Says Tuka, how many who called upon You have You let drown?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the rounds of exchange come, You do not stay to settle the account. These are only dodging games; do I not see what is in Your belly? You sit still, watching like a crane. Tuka says: how many who called on You have You let drown?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram complains that God keeps slipping away whenever it is time to settle accounts, like a debtor who avoids the reckoning. He says he can see through the evasions, the hidden intent behind the stillness. The crane image is sharp: the bird sits motionless and patient, looking holy, but is really waiting to strike, so the outward calm hides indifference. The closing question is an accusation: how many who cried out to God were left to drown? It is the bold lament of a devotee who refuses to pretend God's silence does not hurt.

GATHA 2016

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, end this quarrel before the saints

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं देणें घेणे । गोवी केली अभिमानें ॥1॥
 आतां कां हो निवडूं नेदां । पांडुरंगा येवढा धंदा ॥ध्रु॥
 पांचांमधीं जावें । थोडयासाठीं फजित व्हावें ॥2॥
 तुज ऐसी नाहीं । पांडुरंगा आह्मी कांहीं ॥3॥
 टाकुं तो वेव्हार । तुज बहू करकर ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां । निवडूं संतां हें देखतां ॥5॥ ॥9॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is no real debt between us; You created this entanglement out of pride. Now why will You not let me settle and separate, O Panduranga? Must I be shamed before the assembly for a trivial matter? I am not like You, O Panduranga, not in any way.

Let us end this commerce; the constant friction is too much for You. Says Tuka, now let us settle this before the saints as witnesses.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is no real debt between us; You tangled it up out of pride. Now why will You not let me settle and be free, O Panduranga? This is too big a business. Must I be shamed before the gathering over a small thing? I am not like You, Panduranga, not in any way. Let us drop this trade; the constant friction is too much even for You. Tuka says: now let us settle it before the saints, in their sight.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram treats his relation to God as a tangled account and asks that it finally be cleared. He says there was never any genuine debt; God knotted it up out of His own pride, and now will not let him reach a settlement. He resents being made to look small before others over what should be a minor matter, and freely admits he is in no way God's equal. Worn down by the endless back and forth, he proposes ending the whole transaction and bringing it before the saints as witnesses, so that the dispute between devotee and Lord is resolved openly in holy company.

GATHA 2017

Worldly Metaphors

Devotion, water the one root

मराठी मूळ

सिंचन करितां मूळ । वृक्ष वोल्हावे सकळ ॥1॥
 नको पृथकाचे भरी । पडों एक मूळ धरीं ॥ध्रु॥
 पाणचोःयाचें दार । वरिल दाटावें तें थोर ॥2॥
 वस्व जाला राजा । मग आपुल्या त्या प्रजा ॥3॥
 एक चिंतामणी । फिटे सर्व सुखधणी ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे धांवा । आहे पंढरिये विसांवा ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the root is watered, the entire tree flourishes. Do not be caught up in attending to separate branches; hold fast to the one root.

The main gate of the water channel must be firmly secured. When a man becomes king, all the people become his subjects.

One wish-fulfilling gem satisfies every need. Says Tuka, rush to Pandhari; there you will find true rest.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Water the root, and the whole tree grows fresh. Do not get caught fussing over separate branches; hold fast to the one root. The main gate of the water channel must be held firm; that is the great thing. When a man becomes king, all the people become his subjects. One wish-granting gem meets every need. Tuka says: run to Pandhari; there is your rest.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is teaching that all spiritual effort should be aimed at one source rather than scattered across many ends. He stacks up plain images to make the point: water the root and the whole tree thrives; secure the main gate and the whole channel is fed; win the king and you win all his subjects; hold one wish-fulfilling gem and every desire is satisfied. The lesson is to stop tending the branches, the many lesser practices and wants, and grip the single root. That root, the poem says at the end, is Vitthal at Pandhari, where the soul finds its true rest.

GATHA 2018

The Power of the Name

The Name, fearless servants of Hari

मराठी मूळ

करुं याची कथा नामाचा गजर । आह्मां संवसार काय करी ॥१॥
 ह्मणवूं हरिचे दास लेऊं तीं भूषणें । कांपे तयाभेणें किळकाळ ॥२॥
 आशा भय लाज आड नये चिंता । ऐसी तया सत्ता समर्थाची ॥३॥ ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे करुं ऐसियांचा संग । जेणें नव्हे भंग चिंतनाचा ॥३॥ ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let us tell His story and raise the chant of the name; what can worldly life do to us then? Let us call ourselves servants of Hari and wear those ornaments; death itself will tremble before us. Neither desire, nor fear, nor shame, nor worry can stand in the way; such is the power of the Capable One.

Says Tuka, let us keep the company of those in whose presence our devotion never breaks.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let us tell His story and raise the loud chant of the Name; what can this worldly life do to us then? Let us call ourselves the servants of Hari and wear that as our ornament; death itself trembles in fear of them. Desire, fear, shame, and worry cannot stand in the way; such is the power of the Capable One. Tuka says: let us keep the company of those whose presence never breaks our remembrance.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing the safety the Name gives. Once a life is filled with telling God's story and singing His Name out loud, the ordinary world loses its grip. To wear the title servant of Hari is an ornament that even death fears, because such a person belongs to God. Desire, fear, shame, and anxiety, the inner enemies, can no longer block the way, and Tukaram credits this entirely to God's power, not the devotee's own. He closes with the practical means: keep company with those in whose presence remembrance of God never lapses.

GATHA 2019

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false ascetic

मराठी मूळ

काय सर्प खातो अन्न । काय ध्यान बगाचें ॥१॥
 अंतरींची बुद्ध खोटी । भरलें पोटीं वाईट ॥२॥
 काय उंदीर नाहीं धांवीं । राख लावी गाढव ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सुसर जळीं । काउळीं कां न न्हाती ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Does a serpent eat grain? Does a crane truly meditate? The inner intention is corrupt; the belly is full of wickedness. Does a mouse not run on the threshing floor? Does a donkey roll in ash for purification? Says Tuka, does a crocodile not live in water? Yet crows never become clean by bathing.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Does a serpent eat grain? Does a crane really meditate? The intention inside is false; the belly is full of wickedness. Does a mouse not run on the threshing floor? Does a donkey rub itself with ash to get clean? Tuka says: does a crocodile not live in the water? Yet crows never come clean by bathing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing piety that is only a pose. Each image names a creature that wears the outward marks of holiness while the inner nature is unchanged: the crane stands stock still as if in deep meditation but is only watching for prey; the donkey rolls in ash like an ascetic smeared with sacred ash but is no purer for it; the crow bathes again and again yet stays a crow. His point is that fasting, stillness, ash, and ritual washing prove nothing when the heart inside is greedy and corrupt. The poem turns the reader toward honest self-examination: do not mistake your own holy appearances for a changed heart.

GATHA 2020

Social Criticism

Social criticism, sobered only by the blow

मराठी मूळ

मदें मातलें नागवें नाचे । अनुचित वाचे बडबडी ॥१॥
 आतां शिकवावा कोणासी विचार । कर्म तें दुस्तर करवी धीट ॥२॥
 आलें अंगासी तें बिळवंत गाढें । काय वेडणापुढें धर्मनीत ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कळों येईल तो भाव । अंगावरिल घाव उमटतां ॥३॥ ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Drunk with pride, one dances about naked, babbling improprieties. Whom shall one counsel now? Karma, that relentless force, emboldens the shameless.

When madness possesses the body, what use is moral teaching before the insane? Says Tuka, the true nature becomes clear only when the blows begin to land upon the body.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Drunk with pride, he dances about naked and babbles improper things with his mouth. Whom can you counsel now? Karma, that force hard to cross, makes the shameless one bold. What has taken hold of him is strong and stubborn; what use is moral teaching set before a madman? Tuka says: his true nature will become clear only when the blows begin to land on his body.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a person so drunk on pride that he loses all sense of shame, exposed and raving, beyond the reach of advice. He sees this as the work of karma, a force too hard to cross that emboldens such a person, so reasoning with him is like teaching morality to a madman. The point is not contempt for one man but a warning

about how blinding pride becomes: counsel cannot reach it. The closing line is sober: this kind of person only comes to his senses when consequences strike and the blows land on his own body. It calls the reader to examine whether pride has made him just as deaf to correction.

GATHA 2021

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, no power can buy his feet

मराठी मूळ

सोन्याचे पर्वत करवती पाषाण । अवघे रानोरान कल्पतरु ॥१॥
 परि या दुर्लभ विठोबाचे पाय । तेथें हे उपाय न सरती ॥२॥
 अमृतें सागर भरवे ती गंगा । ह्मणवेल उगा राहें काळा ॥३॥
 भूत भविष्य कळों येईल वर्तमान । करवती प्रसन्न रिद्धिसिद्धी ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even if mountains were made of gold and all stones turned to jewels, if every forest were filled with wish-fulfilling trees, even so, the feet of Vithoba would remain beyond reach; no such means can win them. Even if the seas were filled with nectar and the Ganga flowed with immortal water, even if one could silence death itself, even if one could know past, present, and future and master all powers and yogic seals, even if one could turn the winds of the universe.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Say the mountains turned to gold and the stones to jewels. Say every forest stood full of wish-fulfilling trees. Even then, Vithoba's feet stay out of reach; no such means can win them. Say the seas were filled with nectar and the Ganga ran with deathless water. Say you could silence death itself. Say you could know past, present, and future, and command every power and yogic seal. Say you could turn the winds of the whole universe.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up the greatest things a person could ever gain: limitless wealth, control over death, knowledge of all time, mastery of every occult power. Each is a giant 'even if,' and each falls short. The point is that Vithoba's feet are not a prize you earn or purchase; no amount of power or attainment reaches them. He is naming a different order of worth than the one we usually chase. What we call greatness, even miraculous greatness, cannot buy the one thing he wants.

GATHA 2022

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, liberation is the lesser thing

मराठी मूळ

तुका ह्मणे मोक्ष राहे आलीकडे । इतर बापुडें काय तेथें ॥५॥ ॥१॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Says Tuka, even liberation stands on this side of the threshold; what are all other powers worth before those feet?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka says: even liberation stands on this side of the threshold. What are all other powers worth before those feet?

WHAT IT MEANS

This line completes the long string of 'even ifs' before it. Tukaram places liberation itself, the goal most seekers strive toward, on the near side of the threshold, below Vithoba's feet rather than beyond them. If even mokṣa ranks lower, then the powers and attainments listed earlier count for nothing here. He measures everything against the feet, and against them, the highest spiritual prize is still the lesser thing.

GATHA 2023

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, God dances to the lover's whim

मराठी मूळ

भाविकां हें वर्म सांपडलें निक्कें । सेविती कवतुकें धणीवरि ॥१॥
 इच्छतील तैसा नाचे त्यांचे छंदें । वंदिती तीं पदें सकुमारें ॥२॥
 विसरले मुक्ती भक्तिअभिळासें । ओढत सरिसें सुखा आलें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने नाही मागायाची आस । पांडुरंग त्यांस विसंबेना ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The devoted ones have found the true secret and serve with delight to their full satisfaction. He dances to their whim; they worship His tender feet with adoration.

In their love for devotion, they have forgotten about liberation; that too has been drawn in along with them. Says Tuka, they have no desire to ask for anything; Panduranga never leaves their side.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The devoted ones have found the true secret, and they serve with delight until they are full. He dances however they please, to their own tune; they worship his tender feet with love. In their love for devotion, they have forgotten about liberation; it too has been drawn in along with them. Tuka says: they have no wish to ask for anything; Panduranga never leaves their side.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the open secret the true devotees have discovered: love itself is the whole of it, and they drink it to the full. He turns the usual picture upside down, where God moves at his servants' delight rather than the other way around. They have stopped even wanting liberation; absorbed in love, they pulled it along behind them without trying. Because they ask for nothing, Panduranga stays beside them always. The reward of asking nothing is that nothing leaves you.

GATHA 2024

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the Lord who serves unasked

मराठी मूळ

भक्तां समागमें सर्वभावें हरि । सर्व काम करी न संगतां ॥१॥
 सांटवला राहे हृदयसंपुष्टीं । बाहेर धाकुटी मूतिन उभा ॥२॥
 मागण्याची वास पाहे मुखाकडे । चिंतिल्या रोकडे मनोरथ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जीव भाव देवापायीं । ठेवूनि ते कांहीं न मगती ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

With His devotees, Hari does everything wholeheartedly, attending to all needs without being asked. He is stored away within their hearts, yet He stands outside in a small form upon the brick.

He watches their faces, waiting for them to ask; their wishes are fulfilled the moment they are thought. Says Tuka, those who have placed their lives and love at God's feet ask for nothing at all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

With his devotees, Hari does everything wholeheartedly; he tends to every need before they ask. He is stored away inside their hearts, and at the same time he stands outside in a small form on the brick. He watches their faces, waiting to see what they want; their wishes are granted the moment they think them. Tuka says: those who have laid their life and love at God's feet ask for nothing at all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram shows God as the eager servant of those who love him, attending to their needs before a word is spoken. He holds two images at once: Hari hidden deep within the heart, and Hari standing visible on the brick at Pandhari in his small dark form. God watches the devotee's face the way an anxious lover does, ready to fulfill a wish the instant it forms. And the deepest turn is the last: those who have given themselves entirely no longer ask for anything, because the giving has already filled them.

GATHA 2025

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, where the lover is, God dwells

मराठी मूळ

प्रेमअमृतें रसना ओलावली । मनाची राहिली वृत्त पायीं ॥१॥
 सकळ ही तेथें वोळलीं मंगळें । विष्ट केली जळें आनंदाच्या ॥२॥
 सकळ इंद्रियें जालीं ब्रह्मरूप । ओतलें स्वरूप माजी तया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जेथें वसे भक्तराव । तेथें नांदे देव संदेह नाही ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The tongue is moistened with the nectar of divine love; the mind's attention rests at His feet. All blessings have gathered there; a rain of bliss has fallen.

All the senses have become one with the Supreme; His very form has been poured into them. Says Tuka, wherever the king of devotees dwells, there God surely abides, without any doubt.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The tongue is wet with the nectar of love; the mind's attention rests at his feet. Every blessing has gathered there; a rain of bliss has fallen. All the senses have become the form of Brahman; his own form has been poured into them. Tuka says: wherever the king of devotees lives, there God surely dwells, without any doubt.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures love overflowing the whole person at once: the tongue tasting it, the mind fixed on the feet, blessings pouring down like rain. In that flood the senses themselves are remade, no longer reaching for objects but filled with the divine form. He is saying that devotion does not leave the body behind; it transfigures every faculty. The closing claim is bold: the great devotee is not seeking God in some far place, because God already lives wherever such a lover lives.

GATHA 2026

The Moral Ideal

Self-examination, look at your own faults

मराठी मूळ

कासया गुणदोष पाहों आणिकांचे । मज काय त्यांचें उणें असे ॥१॥
 काय पापपुण्य पाहों आणिकांचें । मज काय त्यांचें उणें असें ॥२॥
 नष्टदुष्टपण कवणाचें वाणू । तयाहून आनु अधिक माझें ॥३॥
 कुचर खोटा मज कोण असे आगळा । तो मी पाहों डोळां आपुलिये ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why should I examine the faults and merits of others? What do I lack because of them? Why should I scrutinize the sins and virtues of others? What do I lose by theirs? If I were to speak of anyone's wickedness, my own faults are far greater. Who is a worse cheat and fraud than I? Let me look at myself with my own eyes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why should I look at the merits and faults of others? What do I lack because of them? Why should I weigh the sins and virtues of others? What do I lose by what is theirs? If I were to name anyone's wickedness, my own is far greater. Who is a worse cheat and fraud than I am? Let me look at myself with my own eyes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the common habit of judging others back onto the judge. He keeps asking what he actually gains or loses by inspecting other people's sins and virtues: nothing. Then he drops the verdict on himself, naming his own faults as larger than any he could point out in another. This is not self-hatred but a discipline of attention: the only conduct I can truly see and change is my own. The eyes that love to watch others are told to turn around.

GATHA 2027

Confession and Sin

Confession, handing over the whole debt

मराठी मूळ

तुका ह्याणे मी भांडवलें पुरता । तुजसी पंढरिनाथा लावियेलें ॥4॥ ॥1॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Says Tuka, I have sufficient capital of my own failings; I have invested it all with You, O Lord of Pandhari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka says: I have plenty of capital in my own failings; I have invested all of it with you, O Lord of Pandhari.

WHAT IT MEANS

This line closes the prayer of self-examination with a strange, frank bargain. Tukaram says the one thing he owns in abundance is his own faults, his only real 'capital.' So he hands that whole stock over to the Lord of Pandhari, making God the keeper of his debts. It is the surrender of a person who has stopped pretending to be good: I bring you what I actually have, which is my failure. The wealth he offers is exactly the thing he cannot fix himself.

GATHA 2028

Appeals and Exhortations

Warning, death is already at your shoulder

मराठी मूळ

काळ जविळ च उभा नेणां । घाली झांपडी खुंटी कानां ॥1॥
 कैसा हुशार सावध राहीं । आपुला तूं अपुलेठायीं॥धु.॥
 काळ जविळच उभा पाहीं । नेदी कोणासि देऊं कांहीं ॥2॥
 काळें पुरविली पाठी । वरुषें जालीं तरी साठी ॥3॥
 काळ भोंवताला भोंवे । राम येऊं नेदी जिद्धे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Death stands right beside you, but you do not know it; it covers your eyes and plugs your ears. How will you remain alert and watchful, present to yourself in your own being? Death stands right next to you; see how it will not let you give anything to anyone.

Death has pursued you steadily for sixty years. Death circles around and around, not letting Rama come to your tongue.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Death stands right beside you and you do not know it; it has covered your eyes and plugged your ears. How will you stay alert and watchful, present to yourself, in your own place? Look, death stands right next to you; it will not let you give anything to anyone. Death has been on your trail steadily; sixty years have passed. Death circles round and round, and will not let Rama come to your tongue.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks like someone shaking a sleeper awake. Death is not far off in the future; it is already at the shoulder, and it works by dulling the senses so we never notice the years going by. He counts sixty of them already gone. The sharpest line is the last: death's real theft is not the body but the chance to say the Name, keeping Rama from reaching the tongue. The urgency of the poem is that the only safe use of the time left is to call on God now, before the senses close for good.

GATHA 2029

Appeals and Exhortations

Warning, burn the karma death feeds on

मराठी मूळ

तुका ह्मणे काळा । कर्म मिळतें तें जाळा ॥५॥ ॥१॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Says Tuka, whatever karma aligns with death, burn it all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka says: whatever karma feeds death, burn it all.

WHAT IT MEANS

This short line answers the warning that came before it. If death keeps its grip through our actions, then the remedy is to destroy the actions that strengthen it. Tukaram says to burn that karma rather than carry it. The fire here is the resolve to cut off the deeds that bind us to dying again, leaving nothing for death to claim.

GATHA 2030

The Moral Ideal

Irony, the wicked as the saint's whetstone

मराठी मूळ

दुष्ट भूषण सज्जनाचें । अलभ्यलाभ पुण्य त्याचें ॥१॥
 धन्य ऐसा परउपकारी । जाय नरका आणिकांवारि ॥२॥
 मळ खाये संवदणी । करी आणिकांची उजळणी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे त्याचा । प्रीती आदर करा साचा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The wicked person is actually an ornament to the good; his existence is a rare opportunity for the virtuous to earn merit. Blessed is such a selfless benefactor who goes to hell for the sake of others.

The washcloth eats the dirt and brightens everyone else. Says Tuka, show genuine love and respect to such a one.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The wicked man is really an ornament to the good; his being there is a rare chance for the virtuous to earn merit. Blessed is such a selfless helper, who goes to hell for the sake of others. The washcloth eats the dirt and leaves everyone else bright. Tuka says: show such a one true love and respect.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks with a sharp, half-smiling irony. He calls the wicked man a benefactor: by giving the good a chance to forgive, to endure, to grow in patience, the wrongdoer becomes the whetstone on which virtue is sharpened. The washcloth image is the heart of it, taking on the dirt so others come out clean. The lesson is not contempt; he tells us to feel genuine gratitude even toward the person who wrongs us, because that very friction is what polishes the soul. The harm is real, yet it can be turned into our own purification.

GATHA 2031

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, blows that make a stone divine

मराठी मूळ

साहोनियां टांकीघाये । पाषाण देव चि जाला पाहें॥१॥
 तया रीती दृढ मन । करीं साधाया कारण ॥२॥
 बाण शस्त्र साहे गोळी । सुरां ठाव उंच स्थळीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे सती । अग्न न देखे ज्या रीती ॥३॥ ॥२॥
 तेणें वेशें माझीं चोरिलीं अंगें । मानावया जग आत्मैपणे ।
 नाहीं चाड भीड संसाराचें कोड । उदासीन सर्व गुणें ।
 भय मोह लज्जा निरसली शंका । अवधियां एक चि पणें ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By enduring the blows of the chisel, the stone itself becomes God. In the same way, make the mind firm to accomplish the true purpose.

The hero who bears sword, arrow, and bullet earns a place on the highest ground. Says Tuka, just as the devoted wife does not see the fire she enters.

IN PLAIN WORDS

By bearing the blows of the chisel, the stone itself becomes God. In the same way, make the mind firm to accomplish the true purpose. The warrior who bears sword, arrow, and bullet wins a place on the highest ground. Tuka says: like the faithful wife who does not see the fire she enters. By that disguise my limbs were stolen away, so the world would take me for the Self. I have no want, no shame, no fondness for the world; in every quality I am indifferent. Fear, delusion, and shame are gone, and doubt with them; all of it has become one single thing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strings together images of what it costs to be transformed. The stone becomes the temple image only by enduring the chisel; the warrior earns the high ground only by standing under the weapons. Each says the same thing: greatness is bought by bearing the blows, so the mind must be made firm. He even reaches for the image of one so set on the goal that the surrounding danger is no longer felt. In the lines that follow he describes the result, a person emptied of fear, shame, delusion, and craving, indifferent to the world, where every distinction has melted into one. The point is that the firmness is not hardness but a steadiness that lets the self be remade.

GATHA 2032

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the senses laid down at the feet

मराठी मूळ

विठ्ठलाच्या पायीं बैसोनि राहिलीं । भागलीं नुटित तेणें ॥१॥
 आतां त्यांसीं काय चाले माझें बळ । जालोंसें दुर्बळ सत्त्वहीन ।
 दग्ध पट दिसे संगति बरवट । काय त्याचें कारण ॥१॥
 आळसें दृष्टी न पाहे आपुलें । एक चि देखिलें सर्वरूप ।
 मानामान तेथें खुंटोनि राहिलें । पिसुन तो कोण बाप ।
 ज्योति ना अंधार अवघा एकंकार । तेथें काय पुण्यपाप ।
 विठ्ठलावांचुनि कांहीं च नावडे । वेगळाल्या भावें रूप ॥२॥
 बळबडिवार लौकिक वेव्हार । गेली आशा तृष्णा माया ।
 सुखदुःखाची वार्ता नाइके । अंतरलों दुरी तया ।
 मीतूपणनिःकाम होऊनि । राहिलों आपुलिया ठायां ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My senses have sat down at Vitthal's feet and, being weary, will not rise. What power do I have against them now? I have become weak and strengthless.

A burnt cloth looks whole in its shape, but what is its real substance? In its laziness, the eye does not look at what belongs to it; it has seen everything as one single form. All distinctions of honor and dishonor have come to a stop; who is the fool now? In that state there is neither light nor darkness, only one undivided existence; what room is there for sin or virtue? Nothing pleases except Vitthal; all separate forms have dissolved.

Worldly power, status, convention, and custom are gone; desire, greed, and illusion have departed. The news of pleasure and pain is no longer heard; I have grown distant from all that.

Having become free of the sense of I and You, desireless, I remain in my own true place.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My senses have sat down at Vitthal's feet and, worn out, will not get up. What power do I have over them now? I have grown weak and without strength. A burnt cloth still looks whole in its shape, but what substance is left in it? In its idleness the eye no longer looks at what is its own; it has seen everything as one single form. Honor and dishonor have come to a stop here; who is the fool now? In that state there is neither light nor darkness, only one undivided being; what room is there for sin or virtue? Nothing pleases except Vitthal; all the separate forms have dissolved. Power, status, custom, and convention are gone; desire, greed, and illusion have left. The talk of pleasure and pain no longer reaches me; I have grown far from all of it. Free of the sense of I and you, with nothing left to want, I rest in my own true place.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes what happens when the senses stop chasing and simply settle at Vitthal's feet. He pictures himself as a burnt cloth, still holding its shape but emptied of substance, no longer pulled by the world's grip. As the eye stops seeking its old objects, the many separate forms collapse into one, and with that the whole machinery of judging falls silent: honor and dishonor, light and darkness, sin and virtue all lose their footing where only one undivided being remains. He names everything that has drained away, status and custom, desire and greed and illusion, even the report of pleasure and pain. What is left is the deepest surrender of all: the sense of 'I' and 'you' dissolved, wanting nothing, simply resting in his own true place.

GATHA 2033

Prayers

Total dependence, the last refuge

मराठी मूळ

तुजविण आतां मज नाहीं कोणी । तुका ह्मणे देवराया ॥३॥ ॥१॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Says Tuka, without You, I have no one, O King of Gods.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Without You, I now have no one. Tuka says: O King of Gods, You are all I have.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a short cry of complete dependence. Tuka has nothing and no one left to lean on, so he turns to Vitthal and says it plainly: apart from God, there is no other. Naming God the King of Gods, he is not flattering; he is placing his whole life in the only hands he trusts. The poem stakes everything on one relationship and asks for no condition in return.

GATHA 2034

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false listener

मराठी मूळ

कथा पुराण ऐकतां । झोंप नाथिलि तत्त्वता । खाटेवरि पडतां । व्यापी चिंता तळमळ ॥1॥
 ऐसी गहन कर्मगति। काय तयासी रडती । जाले जाणते जो चिंतीं । कांहीं नेघे आपुला॥धु.॥
 उदक लावितां न धरे । चिंता करी केव्हां सरे । जाऊं नका धीरें । ह्मणे करितां ढवाळ्या ॥2॥
 जवळी गोंचिड क्षीरा । जैसी कमळणी ददुनरा । तुका ह्मणे दुरा । देशत्यागें तयासी ॥3॥
 संदेह बाधक आपआपणयांतें । रज्जुसर्पवत भासतसे।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When listening to sacred stories and Puranas, the pretender's drowsiness is no true knowledge. Lying in bed, the mind is consumed by worry and restlessness.

Such is the depth of karma's hold; those who call themselves wise gain nothing from their knowledge. When watering the field, they worry about when it will be done; they resist yet pretend to be making progress.

Says Tuka, like a tick that clings close to the milk, or a frog near a lotus, such a one must be sent far away.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You sit through the holy stories and the Puranas, and you doze; that sleep is not knowledge. You lie down on your bed, and worry and restlessness fill you. Such is the deep grip of karma. What good is weeping over it? The one who calls himself wise in his own mind gains nothing of his own. You water the field but keep asking when it will be done. You drag your feet, yet you pretend you are getting somewhere. You cling close like a tick to the milk, like a frog beside the lotus. Tuka says: such a one must be sent far away.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing the man who attends spiritual talks but is not really there. He nods off during the sacred stories, then tosses in bed all night with worry, because nothing has entered him; his drowsiness is mistaken for absorption. The poem names the pattern: a man can call himself wise and still draw no profit from what he hears, dragging his feet while pretending to advance. The tick beside the milk and the frog beside the lotus are images of someone right next to the sweetness yet tasting none of it, and the call to send him far away points at the habit of fake attendance, not at the worth of the person. It is an invitation to examine whether our own listening is real or just proximity.

GATHA 2035

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, you are your own door

मराठी मूळ

भेऊनियां काय देखिलें येणें । मारें घायेंविण लोळतसे ॥१॥
 आपणें चि तारी आपण चि मारी । आपण उद्धरी आपणयां ।
 शुक्निळकेन्यायें गुंतलासी काय । विचारुनि पाहें मोकिळया ॥२॥
 पापपुण्य कैसे भांजिले अख । दशकाचा एक उरविला ।
 जाणोनियां काय होतोसी नेणता । शून्या ठाव रिता नाहीं नाहीं ॥३॥
 दुरा दृष्टी पाहें न्याहाळूनि । मृगजला पाणी न ह्मणें चाडा ।
 धांवतां चि फुटे नव्हे समाधान । तुका ह्मणे जाण पावे पीडा ॥३॥ ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What have you seen that frightens you so? You roll about wounded without anyone having struck you. You alone save yourself, you alone destroy yourself, you alone liberate yourself.

Like a parrot caught in the trap of its own perception, examine yourself and find your freedom. The whole ledger of sin and virtue has been balanced into one.

Knowing the truth, why do you pretend ignorance? In emptiness itself, there is no void. Says Tuka, look from a distance with a steady gaze; do not call a mirage water. The one who keeps chasing it finds no satisfaction and only suffers.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What have you seen that scares you so? You roll on the ground in pain, though no one has struck you. You alone save yourself; you alone destroy yourself; you alone lift yourself up. Like a parrot gripping the perch in its own trap, why are you caught? Look closely and you are already free. The whole ledger of sin and merit has been settled into one. Knowing this, why act as if you do not know? In emptiness there is no empty place; there is nothing missing. Look from a distance with a steady eye. Do not call a mirage water out of thirst. Whoever keeps running after it finds no peace. Tuka says: know this, he only meets pain.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is telling the seeker that his bondage is self-made. The wounds he writhes from were not dealt by anyone outside; the fear has no real object. The image of the parrot is exact: the bird grips a turning perch and believes it is trapped, when letting go is all it ever needed, so the freedom is already there if one would look. Sin and merit, he says, finally balance into one, so there is no real lack to chase. The mirage warns against thirst that invents water where there is none; the one who keeps running after appearances finds only suffering, while steadiness and clear seeing end the chase.

GATHA 2036

Social Criticism

Social criticism, half-hearted in the holy gathering

मराठी मूळ

कथे उभा अंग राखे जो कोणी । ऐसा कोण गणी तया पापा ॥१॥
 येथें तो पातकी न येता च भला । रणीं कुचराला काय चाले ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐलपैल ते थडीचे । बुडतील साच मध्यभागीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Who can count the sins of one who holds back from the sacred story, keeping his body rigid with resistance? Such a wrongdoer is better off not coming at all; a coward has no place on the battlefield. Says Tuka, those who stand on either bank are safe; it is those who linger in the middle current who drown.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Someone stands in the sacred story but holds his body back, stiff with resistance. Who can count the weight of that sin? Such a wrongdoer is better off not coming at all. What use is a coward on the battlefield? Tuka says: those who stand on either bank are safe. It is the ones who linger in the middle current who truly drown.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is sharp about the half-committed devotee. To stand present at the singing of God's story while keeping the body and heart pulled back is worse, he says, than staying away; the coward in the middle of a battle only endangers everyone. The river image lands it: a person fully on one shore or the other is safe, but the one who wades out and then will not commit is the one swept under. The criticism aims at the pattern of holding back, urging us to enter wholly or not pretend to enter at all.

GATHA 2037

Social Criticism

Social criticism, fleeing the kirtan

मराठी मूळ

नावडे ज्या कथा उठोनियां जाती । ते यमा फावती बरे वोजा ॥१॥
 तो असे जवळी गोंचिडाच्या न्यायें । देशत्यागें ठायें तया दुरी ॥२॥
 नव्हे भला कोणी नावडे दुसरा । पाहुणा किंकरा यमा होय ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे तया करावें तें काई । पाषाण कां नाहीं जळामध्यें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who dislike the sacred story and get up and leave become easy prey for Yama, the lord of death. Death clings to them like a tick; only by leaving the country entirely can one escape it.

One who is good to no one, whom no one likes, becomes a guest and servant of Yama. Says Tuka, what can be done for such a one? Does a stone not remain a stone even in water?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who dislike the holy story and get up and walk out fall easy prey to Yama, the lord of death. Death stays close to them like a tick; only by leaving the whole country can they get away from it. The one who is good to no one, whom no one likes, becomes a guest and servant of Yama. Tuka says: what can be done for such a one? Does a stone stop being a stone even in water?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the person who cannot bear the company of God's story and leaves it. Such a one belongs to death, he says: Yama clings as a tick clings, so near that no ordinary distance escapes it. The hardness is the point. A man good to no one and liked by no one has cut himself off, and the stone in water makes it plain, water soaks the stone but never softens it. The harshness is aimed at the closed, unwilling heart and asks the listener whether their own resistance has gone stony.

GATHA 2038

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the absent mind

मराठी मूळ

जवळी नाही चित्त । काय मांडियेलें प्रेत ॥१॥
 कैसा पाहे चिद्रद्रिष्ट । दीप स्नेहाच्या शेवटीं ॥२॥
 कांतेलेंसें श्वान । तैसें दिशा हिंडे मन ॥३॥
 त्याचे कानीं हाणे । कोण बोंब तुका ह्मणे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the mind is not present, what use is the body sitting there like a corpse? He stares vacantly, like a lamp at the last flicker of its oil. His mind wanders in every direction like a starving dog.

Says Tuka, who will shout a warning into such deaf ears?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the mind is not here, what use is the body set up like a corpse? See how empty his gaze is, like a lamp at the last flicker of its oil. His mind runs in every direction like a starving dog. Tuka says: who can shout a warning into ears like his?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures a man present in body but gone in mind. He sits in the holy gathering like a corpse propped up, his stare as thin as a lamp guttering on the last of its oil. While he sits still, his mind is a starving dog roaming everywhere, hunting elsewhere. The closing line is the sorrow of it: no warning can reach ears that absent. The poem turns the listener to ask whether their own attention is truly present or only their body.

GATHA 2039

*The Necessity of Experience**Experience, the saint's whole-world wealth*

मराठी मूळ

दुर्बळा वाणीच्या एक दोनि सिद्ध । सदैवा समाधि विश्वरूपीं ॥१॥
 काय त्याचें वायां गेलें तें एक । सदा प्रेमसुख सर्वकाळ ॥२॥
 तीर्थ देव दुरी तया भाग्यहीना । विश्व त्या सज्जना दुमदुमिलें ॥३॥ ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे एक वाहाती मोळया । भाग्यें आगिळया घरा येती ॥३॥ ॥४॥
 परिमळें काष्ठ ताजवां तुळविलें । आणीक नांवांचीं थोडीं । एक तें कातिवें उभविलीं ढवळारें
 एकाचिया कुड मेडी । एक दीनरूप आणितो मिळया । एक ते बांधोनि माडी

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

For the weak, there are one or two small powers; for the fortunate, there is samadhi in the universal form. Has that man truly lost anything? He enjoys the bliss of divine love at all times.

For the unfortunate, God and holy places remain far away; for the saintly one, the entire universe resonates with His presence. Says Tuka, some carry bundles of straw on their heads, while the fortunate find the treasure coming to their very door.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The weak gain one or two small powers. The fortunate one rests in samadhi, in the universal form. Has that one lost anything at all? He has the joy of love, always, at every hour. For the luckless, God and the holy places stay far away. For the saint, the whole universe rings with God's presence. Tuka says: some carry bundles of straw on their heads, while the fortunate find the treasure come to their own door.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram contrasts two kinds of gain. The merely clever pick up a small power or two, but the truly fortunate soul rests in samadhi and sees God as the whole universe, and so has lost nothing and holds constant love. To the unlucky, God and the sacred places feel distant, while to the saint every place already resounds with the divine, no pilgrimage required. The closing image weighs them: one labors under a head-load of straw, the other simply receives the treasure at his door, because what is sought is nearness of heart, not effort or distance.

GATHA 2040

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the world as a marketplace

मराठी मूळ

अवघियां बाजार एक चि जाला । मांविकलीं आपुल्या पाडीं ॥१॥
 गुण तो सार रूपमध्यकार । अवगुण तो फार पीडीतसे ॥१॥
 एक गुणें आगळे असती । अमोत्य नांवांचे खडे । एक समर्थ दुर्बळा घरीं
 फार मोलाचे थोडे । एक झगमग करिती वाळवंटीं । कोणी न पाहाती तयांकडे
 सभाग्य संपन्न आपुलाले घरीं । मायेक दैन्य बापुडें ॥२॥
 एक मानें रूपें सारिख्या असती । अनेकप्रकार याती । ज्याचिया संचितें जैसें आलें पुढें
 तयाची तैसी च गति । एक उंचपदीं बैसउनि सुखें । दास्य करवी एका हातीं

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In the great marketplace of the world, all things are traded at their own value. Quality is the essence; it is beauty's true measure.

Lack of virtue, however, brings great suffering. Some excel by virtue and are priceless jewels.

Some, though in the house of the strong, are cheap for all their cost. Some glitter in the open, yet none look their way.

The fortunate and prosperous dwell in their own homes, while poverty sits wretched at the gate. Some appear alike in form and beauty, yet are of countless different kinds.

As each one's destiny unfolds, so goes their fate. Some are seated in high places of comfort, while others are made to serve.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The whole world has become one marketplace, and everything is sold at its own worth. Quality is the heart of it; that is what gives form its value. Where virtue is missing, suffering is great. Some stand out by their worth, priceless jewels of a name. Some, kept in a rich man's house, are dear in price yet cheap in truth. Some glitter out on the open sand, and no one even looks their way. The fortunate and full sit in their own homes, while wretched poverty crouches at the gate. Some look alike in worth and form, yet they are of countless kinds. As each one's gathered store comes due, so runs his fate. One is seated high in comfort; another is set to serve with his own hands.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reads the world as a great bazaar where every soul is priced by what it truly carries. Inner quality, not outward form, is the real measure, and where virtue is missing the cost is suffering. He lines up the unfairness plainly: real jewels go unnoticed on the open sand while costly-looking things sit useless in rich houses; the full sit at ease in their homes while the poor crouch wretched at the gate. The turn is that this sorting follows from each one's accumulated store, the fruit of past action coming due, so one is seated high and another set to serve. The poem holds up the marketplace as a mirror, asking what worth we are actually carrying to it.

GATHA 2041

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the wasted chance

मराठी मूळ

तुका ह्मणे कां मानिती सुख । चुकलिया वायां खंती ॥३॥ ॥१॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Says Tuka, why do people embrace this happiness, when missing the real chance leads only to regret?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka says: why do people take this for happiness, when missing the real chance leaves only regret?

WHAT IT MEANS

This brief warning asks why people settle for a shallow pleasure and call it happiness. Tukaram names the cost they overlook: the real opportunity slips by while they are content with less. What remains afterward is only regret, when the moment that mattered cannot be taken back. It is a quiet push to weigh what we are calling happiness against what we are letting go.

GATHA 2042

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, at home in God's house

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं आह्मां शत्रु सासुरें पिसुन । दाटलें हें घन माहियेर ॥१॥
 पाहें तेथें पांडुरंग रखुमाई । सत्यभामा राही जननिया ॥२॥
 लज्जा भय कांही आह्मां चिंता नाही । सर्वसुखें पायीं वोळगती ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी सदैवाचीं बाळें । जालों लडिवाळें सकळांचीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We have no enemies, no troublesome in-laws. Our household is filled with the bounty of our true home.

Wherever I look, there is Panduranga, Rakhumai, Satyabhama, Rukmini, and all the divine mothers. We have no shame, fear, or worry; all joys attend at their feet.

Says Tuka, we are children born under a fortunate star, the darlings of everyone.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We have no enemies, no troublesome in-laws. Our home is full, packed with the riches of our true house. Wherever I look there is Panduranga, Rakhumai, Satyabhama, Rahi, and all the divine mothers. We have no shame, no fear, no worry; every joy waits at their feet. Tuka says: we are children born under a fortunate star, the darlings of them all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sings from the joy of belonging wholly to God's household. Using the warmth of a daughter who has found her true home, he says there are no enemies and no harsh in-laws here, only abundance. Everywhere he turns he sees Panduranga with Rakhumai, Satyabhama, Rahi, and the divine mothers, so the house is full of God's family. Stripped of shame, fear, and worry, he calls himself and his companions the fortunate children whom everyone in that house holds dear, a picture of complete belonging and ease in the divine.

GATHA 2043

The Nature of God

The nature of God, the unseen sustainer

मराठी मूळ

गभाअ असतां बाळा । कोण पाळी त्याचा लळा ॥१॥
 कैसा लाघवी सूत्रधारी । कृपाळुवा माझा हरी ॥२॥
 सर्प पिलीं वितां चि खाय । वांचलिया कोण माय ॥३॥
 गगनीं लागला कोसरा । कोण पुरवी तेथें चारा ॥४॥
 पोटीं पाषाणांचे जीव । कवण जीव त्याचा भाव ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे निश्चळ राहें । होईल तें सहज पाहें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

While the child is still in the womb, who nurtures its growth? How skillful is this puppeteer, how merciful is my Hari. The serpent devours its own young the moment they hatch; who is the mother of those that survive? A spider has spun its web in the sky; who supplies food to it there? Living beings dwell even inside stones; who is the life-force that sustains them? Says Tuka, remain steadfast and calm; whatever is meant to happen will unfold naturally.

IN PLAIN WORDS

While the child is still in the womb, who tends its growing? How skillful is this puppeteer; how merciful is my Hari. The serpent eats its young the moment they hatch; who is the mother of those that live? A spider strings its web high in the sky; who carries food to it there? There are living beings inside stones; whose life is their life? Tuka says: stay still and steady. Whatever is meant to be, watch it unfold on its own.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up examples of life sustained by no visible hand. Who feeds the unborn child, who mothers the snakelings the serpent does not devour, who provisions the spider hung in empty air, who keeps alive the creatures sealed in stone? Each question points to one answer: Hari, the skillful puppeteer and merciful keeper who upholds all things unseen. The poem lands on its counsel, since this care is already at work everywhere, the seeker can stop straining and stay still, trusting that what is meant to happen will happen on its own.

GATHA 2044

*The Necessity of Experience**Experience, prayer for love at the feet*

मराठी मूळ

न ह्यणे कवणां सिद्ध साधक गंधार । अवघा विश्वंभर वांचूनियां ॥१॥
 गातां प्रेमगुण शंका माझ्या मनीं । नाचतां रंगणीं नाठवावी ॥२॥
 देई चरणसेवा भूतांचें भजन । वर्णा अभिमान सांडवूनि ॥३॥
 आशापाश माझी तोडीं माया चिंता । तुजविण वेथा नको कांहीं ॥४॥
 तुका ह्यणे सर्व भाव तुझे पायीं । राहे ऐसें देई प्रेम देवा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I will not call anyone accomplished, striving, or ignorant; all I see is the One who sustains the universe. When singing His loving qualities, let no doubt enter my mind; when dancing in His arena, let nothing else be remembered.

Grant me the service of Your feet through worship of all beings, having cast off the pride of caste. Cut away the noose of desire, illusion, and worry; I want no pain apart from You.

Says Tuka, let all my love rest at Your feet; grant me such devotion, O God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will call no one accomplished, no one a seeker, no one a fool. I see only the One who holds up the universe, and nothing else. When I sing of His loving qualities, let no doubt enter my mind. When I dance in His circle, let nothing else be remembered. Grant me the service of Your feet, worshipping You in all beings, with the pride of caste cast off. Cut the noose of my desire, illusion, and worry. I want no pain except the longing for You. Tuka says: let all my love rest at Your feet. O God, grant me such devotion.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays out of a vision where the usual labels fall away. He refuses to rank anyone as adept, striver, or fool, because he sees only the one God sustaining all, so the divisions dissolve. From that seeing comes his asking: undoubting song, self-forgetting dance, and the service of God's feet practiced as worship of every being, which means dropping the pride of caste altogether. He begs to have the cords of desire, illusion, and worry cut, wanting no ache but the ache for God. The closing line names the whole request: let all his love come to rest at God's feet, and let that devotion be granted.

GATHA 2045

*The Necessity of Experience**Union, the lesser becomes the greater*

मराठी मूळ

अग्निमाजी गेलें । अग्नि होऊन तें च ठेलें ॥1॥
 काय उरलें तया पण । मागील तें नाम गुण ॥ध्रु॥
 लोह लागेपरिसा अंगीं । तो ही भूषण जाला जगीं ॥2॥
 सरिता वोहळा ओघा । गंगे मिळोनि जाल्या गंगा ॥3॥
 चंदनाच्या वासें । तरु चंदन जालेस्पर्श ॥4॥
 तुका जडला संतां पायीं । दुजेपणा ठाव नाहीं ॥5॥ ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whatever enters fire becomes fire itself. What remains of its former name and nature? When iron touches the philosopher's stone, it too becomes an ornament to the world.

When rivers and streams merge into the Ganga, they all become the Ganga. By the fragrance of sandalwood, the neighboring tree becomes sandalwood through mere contact.

Says Tuka, having clung to the feet of the saints, there is no room left for any sense of separateness.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever goes into the fire becomes fire. What is left of its old name? What is left of what it was before? When iron touches the touchstone, it too becomes an ornament in the world. When rivers and streams flow into the Ganga, they all become the Ganga. By the scent of the sandalwood, the tree beside it becomes sandalwood at a touch. Tuka says: I have held fast to the feet of the saints. There is no room left in me for being a separate self.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strings together four pictures of one thing: contact that does not leave you what you were. Fire takes the wood, the touchstone takes the iron, the Ganga takes the streams, the sandal scent takes the neighboring tree, and in each case the lesser thing loses its old name and takes on the nature of the greater. Then he turns it on himself. Clinging to the feet of the saints is the same kind of contact: it does not improve the separate self, it dissolves it. The point of company with the holy, he is saying, is not to become a better Tuka but to have no leftover sense of being apart at all.

GATHA 2046

The Saints

Longing for the saints, the worn step

मराठी मूळ

ऐशा भाग्यें जालों । तरी धन्य जन्मा आलों ॥१॥
 रुळें तळीले पायरी । संत पाय देती वरी ॥ध्रु॥
 प्रेमामृतपान । होईल चरणरजें स्नान ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे सुखें । तया हरतील दुःखें॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If such fortune comes to me, then indeed this birth is blessed. Like the bottom step that lies worn under foot, upon which the saints place their holy feet.

The nectar of love will flow, and the dust of their feet will become my bath. Says Tuka, in their happiness, they will take away all my sorrows.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If such fortune comes to me, then my birth is blessed. Let me be the bottom step, worn down, lying low, where the saints set their feet as they climb. Let me drink the nectar of their love. Let the dust of their feet be the water I bathe in. Tuka says: in their joy, my sorrows will be carried away.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays to be placed not above but underneath. He asks to be the lowest step of the stair, the one rubbed smooth because every foot lands on it, so that the saints will tread on him as they pass. He does not ask for their notice or their blessing from a height; he asks for their feet, their love as nectar, the dust they leave behind as his bath. The whole desire is downward, and that is the fortune he calls blessed: when their happiness touches him, his own griefs are simply taken away.

GATHA 2047

The Saints

Adoration, above liberation itself

मराठी मूळ

करितां या सुखा । अंतपार नाहीं लेखा ॥१॥
 माथां पडती संतपाय । सुख कैवल्य तें काय ॥ध्रु॥
 ऐसा लाभ नाहीं । दुजा विचारितां कांहीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे गोड । तेथें पुरे माझें कोड॥३॥ ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is no end or measure to this happiness. When the feet of the saints rest upon one's head, what is the bliss of liberation compared to that? Says Tuka, there is no other gain like this, when one considers it carefully; that sweetness is where all my longing finds fulfillment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is no end and no measure to this joy. When the feet of the saints come to rest on my head, what is the bliss of liberation next to that? There is no other gain like it; think it over, and you will find none. Tuka says: that sweetness is so good that there my every longing is satisfied.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram weighs the touch of the saints' feet against the highest prize the tradition offers, kaivalya, final liberation, and finds liberation the smaller thing. He calls the joy of that touch boundless and beyond counting, then dares the listener to look for anything that can match it. This is not careless talk: he is saying that the living contact of holy company outweighs even release from rebirth, because in that sweetness every want he has ever carried is already met. Where most seek liberation, Tuka says he has found something fuller and stops there.

GATHA 2048

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the vast held in the small

मराठी मूळ

वेद जया गाती । आह्मां तयाची संगति ॥१॥
 नाम धरियेलें कंठीं । अवघा सांटविला पोटीं ॥२॥
 ॐकाराचें बीज । हातीं आमुचे तें निज ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बहु मोटें । अणुरण्यां धाकुटें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He whom the Vedas praise, we have His company. His name is held at our throat; we have stored Him entirely within us.

The seed of Om is in our hands; it is our very own. Says Tuka, He is immeasurably vast, yet smaller than the smallest atom.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one whom the Vedas sing, His company is ours. We have held His name in our throat; we have stored the whole of Him inside us. The seed of Om is in our hand; it is our very own. Tuka says: He is greater than the greatest, and smaller than the smallest atom.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram claims an intimacy with God that the scriptures only circle from outside. The Vedas can sing of Him, but the devotee carries Him: the Name lodged in the throat, the whole of Him kept within, the seed-sound Om resting in the hand like something owned. The closing line names the paradox that makes this possible: the same God who is larger than everything is also smaller than the smallest atom, so He can be held in a throat and a heart. Devotion, Tuka says, reaches by love what learning approaches only by description.

GATHA 2049

Prayers

Prayer, the muddy stream and the Ganga

मराठी मूळ

तूं श्रीयेचा पति । माझी बहु हीन याती ॥१॥
 दोघे असों एके ठायीं । माझा माथा तुझे पायीं ॥२॥
 माझ्या दीनपणां पार । नाहीं बहु तूं उदार ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पांडुरंगा । मी ओहोळ तूं गंगा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You are the Lord of Lakshmi; my caste is very lowly. Yet let us dwell together in one place, with my head at Your feet.

There is no limit to my poverty, and You are boundlessly generous. Says Tuka, O Panduranga, I am a muddy stream and You are the Ganga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You are the Lord of Lakshmi; my birth is very low. Still, let the two of us stay in one place, my head at Your feet. There is no limit to how poor I am; there is no limit to how generous You are. Tuka says: O Panduranga, I am a small dirty stream, and You are the Ganga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets his lowness beside God's greatness and asks them to share a single place anyway. He does not hide the gap: he is of low birth and bottomless poverty, while God is the consort of Fortune herself and boundlessly giving. His one request is closeness on the only terms he can offer, his head laid at the feet. The closing image makes the whole prayer turn on God's nature, not Tuka's worth: a muddy trickle has no claim on the Ganga, yet when it pours in, the Ganga receives and purifies it. His hope rests entirely on the generosity, not on his own standing.

GATHA 2050

Prayers

Prayer, the beggar settles accounts

मराठी मूळ

मी याचक तूं दाता । काय सत्य पाहों आतां ॥१॥
 म्या तों पसरिला हात । करीं आपुलें उचित ॥२॥
 आह्मी घ्यावें नाम । तुह्मां समाधान काम ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवराजा । वाद खंडीं तुझा माझा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am the beggar, You are the giver; let us see what truth comes of this now. I have stretched out my hand; do what is fitting on Your part.

Our task is to chant Your name; Your task is to grant us love and contentment. Says Tuka, O King of Gods, put an end to this dispute between You and me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am the beggar, You are the giver; now let us see what truth comes of it. I have stretched out my hand; do whatever is right on Your side. Our work is to take Your name; Your work is to give us peace and contentment. Tuka says: O King of Gods, end this dispute between You and me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks to God almost as one party in a contract, holding Him to His own role. The roles are fixed: a beggar can only beg, and a giver is bound to give, so Tuka has done his part by stretching out his hand and now waits to see whether God will do His. He divides the labor plainly: the devotee's duty is to chant the Name, God's duty is to grant the contentment that should follow. The dispute he asks to be settled is the gap between the chanting he keeps up and the peace he has not yet been given; he is pressing God, with a kind of bold tenderness, to make good on the bargain.

GATHA 2051

Prayers

Prayer, hide me in You

मराठी मूळ

तुझे पोटीं ठाव । व्हावा ऐसा माझा भाव ॥१॥
 करीं वासनेसारिखें । प्राण फुटे येणें दुःखें ॥२॥
 अहंकार खोटे । वाटे श्वापदांची थाटे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आई । हातीं धरुनि संग देई ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My desire is to find a place within You. Fulfill this longing; my life breaks apart under the weight of this pain.

Pride and falsehood seem like a pack of wild beasts. Says Tuka, O Mother, take my hand and walk beside me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let me find a place inside You; this is what I long for. Grant me my wish; my breath breaks apart under this pain. Pride and falsehood crowd around me like a pack of wild beasts. Tuka says: O Mother, take me by the hand and walk with me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram begs to be hidden inside God as a frightened child hides in a parent. His longing is not for comfort but for shelter, and the urgency is real: the ache of separation is breaking his very breath. The danger he names is inward, not outward. Pride and falsehood close in on him like wild animals, and he knows he cannot fight them

off alone. So he ends by calling God Mother and asking for the simplest help there is, a hand to hold and someone to walk beside him through the danger.

GATHA 2052

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the clinging child

मराठी मूळ

दारीं परोवरी । कुडीं कवाडीं मी घरीं ॥१॥
 तुमच्या लागलों पोषणा । अवघे ठायीं नारायणा ॥ध्रु॥
 नेदीं खाऊं जेवूं । हातींतोंडींचें ही घेऊं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे अंगीं । जडलों ठायींचा सलगी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

At the door, at the threshold, in every nook and corner of the house, I cling to You for sustenance, O Narayana, in every place. I will not let You eat or drink; I will even take what is in Your hand or mouth.

Says Tuka, I have become permanently attached through old familiarity.

IN PLAIN WORDS

At the door, on the porch, by the wall, at the gate, I am there in the house with You. I have fastened myself to You for my feeding, everywhere, O Narayana. I will not let You eat or drink in peace; I will snatch even what is in Your hand and Your mouth. Tuka says: I have stuck to Your body out of an old, settled familiarity.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram plays the part of a small child who will not leave a parent alone. He is everywhere in the house, at the door and the gate and the wall, depending on God for his every meal and giving Him no privacy. The image of grabbing the food from God's own hand and mouth is the boldness of a child who feels wholly entitled, not a stranger who would be shy. He names the reason in the last line: this clinging comes from long familiarity, a closeness so old and settled that there is no formality left in it. Devotion at its most intimate, he suggests, is this kind of shameless belonging.

GATHA 2053

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, my joy is Your joy

मराठी मूळ

मज कोणी कांहीं करी । उमटे तुमचे अंतरीं ॥१॥
 व्याला वाडविलें ह्युण । मज सुख तुज सीण ॥ध्रु॥
 माझें पोट धालें । तुझे अंगीं उमटलें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे खेळें । तेथें तुमचिया बळें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whatever anyone does to me, it is felt within You. Having nurtured and raised me, my happiness is Your happiness, and my trouble is Your trouble.

When my belly is full, the signs show on Your body. Says Tuka, I play only by the strength of Your power.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever anyone does to me, it shows up inside You. You bore me and raised me, so my comfort is Your comfort and my weariness is Your strain. When my stomach is full, the sign of it appears on Your body. Tuka says: whatever I play at, I play by Your strength.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a bond so complete that he and God no longer have separate fortunes. What is done to him registers in God; because God brought him into being and raised him, the devotee's ease and exhaustion are felt as God's own. Even his full belly shows on God's body, the way a nursing mother's child being fed shows in her. The closing line names the ground of all this: every move Tuka makes, every game he plays, draws on God's strength, not his own. He is claiming the helplessness and the safety of a child who knows the parent will feel and supply everything.

GATHA 2054

Prayers

Prayer, empty hands, folded hands

मराठी मूळ

जोडोनियां कर । उभा राहिलों समोर ॥१॥
 हैं चि माझेंभांडवल।जाणे कारण विठ्ठल ॥ध्रु॥
 भाकितों करुणा । आतां नुपेक्षावे दीना ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे डोई । ठेवीं वेळोवेळं पायीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

With folded hands I stand before You. This alone is my capital, and Vitthal knows it well.

I plead for mercy; do not neglect the helpless now. Says Tuka, again and again I place my head at Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

With folded hands I stand before You. This alone is all I have, and Vitthal knows why. I cry out for mercy: do not turn away from the helpless now. Tuka says: again and again I lay my head at Your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram comes before God owning nothing he can offer except the gesture of asking. Folded hands are his whole capital, his entire wealth, and he says Vitthal knows the reason, that this emptiness is exactly what brings a beggar to the door. From that poverty he pleads for mercy and presses the one claim a helpless person has: that the helpless are precisely whom mercy is for, so God must not overlook him. The repeated bowing of his head at the feet is the prayer made physical, asked over and over because he has no other argument and no other place to go.

GATHA 2055

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the settled pact

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी घ्यावें तुझें नाम । तुम्ही आह्मां द्यावें प्रेम॥१॥
 ऐसें निवडिलें मुळीं । संतीं बैसोनि सकळीं ॥ध्रु॥
 माझी डोई पायांवरी । तुम्ही न धरावी दुरी ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे केला । खंड दोघांचा विट्टला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We shall take Your name; You shall give us love. This was settled long ago by all the saints together.

My head rests upon Your feet; do not push me away. Says Tuka, the division between us both has been resolved, O Vitthal.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We are to take Your name; You are to give us love. This was decided long ago, all the saints sitting together and choosing it. My head rests on Your feet; do not push me away. Tuka says: the division between the two of us is over, O Vitthal.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram treats devotion as a settlement reached long before him, agreed by the whole assembly of saints. The terms are clean and binding: the devotees chant the Name, and God in return gives love. On the strength of that old pact he lays his head at the feet and asks God not to keep him at a distance, since the arrangement leaves no room for distance. The closing line says the separation between devotee and God has been dissolved, not as a thing Tuka achieved alone but as the natural result of an agreement the saints made and God is bound to honor.

GATHA 2056

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the old account closed

मराठी मूळ

वारिलें लिगाड । बहुदिसांचें हें जाड ॥१॥
 न बोलावें ऐसें केलें । काहीं वाउगें तितुलें ॥ध्रु॥
 जाला चौघांचार । गेला खंडोनि वेव्हार ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । करीन ते घ्यावी सेवा॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The old entanglement, thick and long-standing, has been cleared away. Whatever was spoken in vain has been set aside.

The common account has been settled; the old transactions are finished. Says Tuka, O God, accept whatever service I offer.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The old tangle, heavy and built up over many days, has been cleared. It has been arranged so that I need not speak; all that was useless is set aside. The matter was settled before witnesses; the old dealings are finished and done. Tuka says: O God, now accept whatever service I do.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks of his long bondage as a debt finally cleared, using the language of accounts and disputes. The entanglement of worldly attachment, thick and grown over many years, has been resolved, and with it goes all the pointless arguing he need no longer take part in. He pictures the settlement as done openly, with witnesses, the old transactions struck off the books for good. With that burden gone, only one thing is left for him: he offers himself to God in service and asks that whatever small service he gives be accepted.

GATHA 2057

Worldly Life

Worldly snares, hold patience for the soul

मराठी मूळ

पायरवे अन्न । मग करी क्षीदक्षीण ॥१॥
 ऐसे होती घातपात । लाभे विण संगें थीत ॥ध्रु॥
 जन्माची जोडी । वाताहात एके घडी ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे शंका । हित आड या लौकिका ॥३॥
 धीर धरुं जिवासाठीं । येऊं नेदूं लाभा तुटी ॥ध्रु॥
 उचित समय । लाजनिवारावें भय ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे कळा । जाणों नेम नाहीं बाळा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Rich food at first, then it brings on weakness. Such are the treacheries that come from profitless company.

A lifetime's earnings can be wasted in a single moment. Says Tuka, worldly honor and reputation stand in the way of true benefit. Hold patience for the sake of the soul; do not let loss come to the gain.

At the right moment, overcome both shame and fear. Says Tuka, know the art; there is no fixed rule for the innocent.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Rich food at first; then it leaves you weak. So go the treacheries that come from useless company: you gain nothing. A whole lifetime's earnings can be wasted in a single moment. Tuka says: worldly honor and good name stand in the way of your true good. Hold your patience for the sake of the soul. Do not let loss eat into the gain. At the right moment, throw off both shame and fear. Tuka says: learn the art. There is no fixed rule for the innocent.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns that the company you keep can ruin you the way a rich dish gives quick pleasure and then sickness: the loss comes slowly and you mistake it for a treat. A lifetime of spiritual earning can be squandered in one careless moment, and what trips people most is their concern for reputation and respectability, which they let outweigh their real good. So he counsels patience held for the soul's sake, and a willingness, when the moment calls for it, to set aside both shame and fear rather than playing it safe. The closing line says there is no rigid rule to memorize; the path asks for discernment, the art of knowing when to act.

GATHA 2058

Ecstasy and Joy

Crossing accomplished, the raft of the Name

मराठी मूळ

उलंघिली लाज । तेणें साधियेलें काज ॥१॥
 सुखें नाचे पैलतीरीं । गेलों भवाचे सागरीं ॥२॥
 नामाची सांगडी । सुखें बांधली आवडी ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By casting off shame, the real purpose was accomplished. Now I dance happily on the far shore, having crossed the ocean of existence.

The raft of the name was bound together with joyful love.

IN PLAIN WORDS

By throwing off shame, the real work got done. Now I dance happily on the far shore. I have crossed the ocean of this existence. The raft of the Name I bound together with joyful love.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names what carried him across the ocean of worldly existence: the Name of God, lashed into a raft and held together by nothing but loving delight. The first step was casting off shame, the worry about how he looked to others, because that fear is what keeps a person on the near shore. Having let it go, he says the true purpose of a life is finished, and he dances freely on the far bank. The image is plain: love is the only binding, and the Name is the only vessel.

GATHA 2059

Longing and Separation

Demanding what is mine, a beggar's sit-in

मराठी मूळ

बैसलोंसे दारीं । धरणें कोंडोनि भिकारी ॥1॥
 आतां कोठें हालों नेदीं । बरी सांपडली संदी ॥ध्रु॥
 किती वेरझारा । मार्गे घातलीया घरा ॥2॥
 माझें मज नारायणा । देतां ां रे नये मना ॥3॥
 भांडावें तें किती । बहु सोसिली फजिती ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं । लाज तुझे अंगीं कांहीं ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have sat down at Your door like a beggar staging a sit-in. Now I will not let You move from here; I have caught the right moment.

How many rounds have I made to this house before? Give me what is mine, O Narayana; does it not trouble Your conscience to withhold it? How much longer must I argue? I have endured enough humiliation. Says Tuka, there is not an ounce of shame in You.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have sat down at your door. Like a beggar, I am staging a sit-in, blocking the way. Now I will not let you move from here. I have caught the right moment at last. How many rounds have I already made to this house? Give me what is mine, Narayana. Does it not trouble your conscience to hold it back? How long must I keep arguing? I have swallowed enough humiliation. Tuka says: there is not an ounce of shame in you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram approaches God not as a polite suppliant but as a creditor who plants himself at the door and refuses to budge until he is paid. He insists that liberation is not charity but his own due, something already his, and he scolds Narayana for withholding it with no apparent prick of conscience. The complaint of having made many fruitless trips and endured much humiliation is the voice of a long, frustrated longing that has turned bold. The final jab, that God has no shame, is the freedom of the lover who can accuse the Beloved precisely because the bond is unbreakable; the rudeness is intimacy, not contempt.

GATHA 2060

Devotion to Vitthal

The faithful gatekeeper, claiming his wage

मराठी मूळ

जालों द्वारपाळ । तुझे राखिलें सकळ ॥1॥
 नाहीं लागों दिलें अंगा । आड ठाकलों मी जगा ॥धु॥
 करुनियां नीती । दिल्याप्रमाणें चालती ॥2॥
 हातीं दंड काठी । भा जिवाचिये साटीं ॥3॥
 बळ बुद्धी युक्ती । तुज दिल्या सर्व शक्ती ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे खरा । आतां घेईन मुशारा ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have become Your gatekeeper, guarding all that is Yours. I have stood as a shield between You and the world, not letting anything touch You.

I have established order, and all follow the given rule. In my hand I hold the staff and rod, staking my very life on this duty.

All my strength, intellect, and skill, all my powers, I have given to You. Says Tuka, now I will collect my wages in full.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have become your gatekeeper. I have guarded all that is yours. I let nothing touch you. I stood as a shield between you and the world. I kept order; everyone follows the rule I lay down. In my hand I hold the staff and the rod, and I stake my very life on this watch. All my strength, my mind, my skill, every power I have, I have handed over to you. Tuka says: it is true, and now I will collect my wages in full.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram casts himself as a servant who has given everything to his master's house: his strength, his intellect, his every faculty, and even his life, standing armed at the gate to keep the world from troubling God. Having served so completely, he now comes to claim his wages, and the wage a devotee asks is God himself. The boldness is the same demanding love that runs through these poems: total self-surrender becomes the very ground on which he presses his claim. He is not bargaining for things; he has poured himself out and asks to be paid in the only coin that matters.

GATHA 2061

*The Necessity of Experience**Remembrance, the meeting within separation*

मराठी मूळ

फळाची तों पोटी । घडे वियोगें ही भेटी ॥१॥
 करावें चिंतन । सार तें चि आठवण ॥ध्रु॥
 चित्त चित्ता ग्वाही । उपचारें चाड नाही ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । पावे ंतरींची सेवा॥३॥ ॥१५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Within the fruit itself, even through separation, the meeting takes place. The essence is contemplation, the remembrance itself.

The chitta bears witness to the chitta; external gestures are unnecessary. Says Tuka, O God, inner devotion reaches You.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Within the fruit itself, even in separation, the meeting happens. So do your contemplation. The essence is just this: remembrance. One heart bears witness to the other; outward gestures are not needed. Tuka says: God, it is the inward service that reaches you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram quietly answers the ache of being apart from God: even in separation the meeting is already taking place, the way the whole tree is present inside its fruit. The work, then, is contemplation, and its whole essence is remembrance, simply keeping God in mind. He sets inward devotion above outward ritual, saying one heart bears witness to the other directly and no ceremonial gesture is required. The teaching is plain and consoling: what reaches God is the service offered within.

GATHA 2062

*Longing and Separation**Surrender, your ways past my understanding*

मराठी मूळ

दुर्बळाचें कोण । ऐके घालूनियां मन । राहिलें कारण। तयावांचूनि काय तें ॥१॥
 कळों आलें अनुभवं । पांडुरंगा माझ्या जीवें । न संगतां ठावें । पडे चर्या देखोनि ॥ध्रु॥
 काम क्रोध माझा देहीं । भेदाभेद ोले नाही । होतें तेथें कांहीं । तुज कृपा करितां॥२॥
 हें तों नव्हे उचित । नुपेक्षावें शरणागत । तुका ह्मणे रीत । तुमची आह्मां न कळे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Who will listen attentively to the poor? Without Him, what purpose remains? Experience has revealed this to me, O Panduranga: without being told, You see the state of one's life. Desire and anger dwell in my body; the words of distinction and unity are meaningless there.

Had You shown grace, even that might have been remedied. This is not fair; the one who has surrendered should not be ignored.

Says Tuka, Your ways are beyond our understanding.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Who will set his mind to listen to the poor? Without him, what purpose is left? Experience has taught me this, Panduranga, with my own life: without being told, you see the state of a person. Desire and anger live in my body. There the words of difference and oneness mean nothing. Had you shown grace, even that might have been healed. This is not right. The one who has surrendered should not be ignored. Tuka says: your ways are beyond our understanding.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as the helpless poor man whom no one else will hear, for whom God is the only purpose left. He confesses honestly that desire and anger still live in him, that the fine talk of difference and non-difference cannot touch that knot; only grace could have healed it. So his prayer turns into gentle protest: it is not right to ignore one who has surrendered. The closing line lets the complaint rest in trust, admitting that God's ways are past human understanding even when they wound.

GATHA 2063

Longing and Separation

Two diverging paths, holding fast to the feet

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी भाव जाणों देवा । न कळती तुझिया मावा । गणिकेचा कुढावा । पतना न्यावा दशरथ ॥१॥
तरी म्यां काय गा करावें । कोण्या रीती तुज पावें । न संगतां ठावें । तुह्मांविण न पडे ॥ध्रु॥
दोनी फाकलिया वाटा । ओवी केला घटापटा । नव्हे धीर फांटा । आड रानें भरती ॥२॥
तुका ह्मणे माझे डोळे । तुझे देखती हे चाळे । आतां येणें वेळे । चरण जीवें न सोडीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O God, we know devotion, but we cannot fathom Your deceptions. A courtesan's longing could lead Dasharatha himself to ruin.

Then what am I to do? By what means can I reach You? Without You, nothing is known or found. Two paths diverge, and confusion has created a great turmoil; my resolve falters, and dense forests block the way.

Says Tuka, my eyes see all Your tricks; this time, I will not let go of Your feet with my very life.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We know devotion, God, but we cannot read your illusions. A courtesan's longing could drag even Dasharatha to ruin. So what am I to do? By what road can I reach you? Nothing is known or found without you. Two paths fork before me; the confusion has stirred up great turmoil. My resolve breaks, and thick forests block the way. Tuka says: my eyes see all your tricks. This time I will not let go of your feet, not with my life.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram admits the limit of his own effort: he may know the way of devotion, but he cannot see through God's deceptions, the maya that scatters a seeker between forked roads. He confesses that desire and worldly pull are strong enough to undo even the great, so by himself he cannot find the path. Out of that helplessness he makes the only move left to him, gripping God's feet and vowing not to let go even at the cost of his life. The poem turns confusion into clinging: when the mind cannot find the road, the body holds onto God and refuses to be moved.

GATHA 2064

Longing and Separation

The quarrel comes to a head, settle it now

मराठी मूळ

वेरझारीं जाला सीण । बहु केलें क्षीदक्षीण । भांडणासी दिन । आजी येथें फावला ॥१॥
 आतां काय भीड भार । धरुनियां लोकचार । बुडवूनि वेव्हार । सरोबरी करावी ॥२॥
 आलें बहुतांच्या मना । कां रे न ोसी ाहाणा । मुळींच्या वचना । आह्मी जागों आपुल्या ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे चौघांमधीं । तुज नेलें होतें आधीं । आतां नामधीं । उरी कांहीं राहिली ॥३॥ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Going back and forth has brought exhaustion; much energy has been wasted. Today is the day the quarrel comes to a head.

Now why should I hold back out of social propriety? Let me drown all conventions and settle this once and for all. Many have thought the same: why do You not listen, You stubborn One? We are awake to the original promise.

Says Tuka, I had taken You before the assembly once before; now do You still have anything left to withhold?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

All this going back and forth has worn me out. So much strength has drained away. Today is the day the quarrel comes to a head, right here. Now why should I hold back for the sake of appearances? Let me drown all the niceties and settle this once and for all. Many others have thought the same: why do you not listen, you stubborn one? We hold you to your first promise. Tuka says: I had once dragged you before the assembly already. Do you still have anything left to keep back?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram, exhausted by endless fruitless approaches to God, decides to stop being polite and force the matter to a conclusion today. He refuses to let social propriety hold him back any longer and calls God stubborn for not answering, insisting on the original promise of grace that he says is owed. He reminds God that he has confronted

him publicly before, and demands to know what could possibly be left to withhold. The whole abhanga is the devotee's bold ultimatum: the long, draining wait ends in a refusal to leave until the debt of grace is paid.

GATHA 2065

Worldly Metaphors

The wishing tree, gain and loss within

मराठी मूळ

कल्पतरूखालीं । फळें येती मागीतलीं ॥१॥
तेथें बैसल्याचा भाव । विचारुनि बोलें ठाव ॥२॥
द्यावें तें उत्तर । येतो प्रतित्याचा फेर ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे मनीं । आपुल्या च लाभहानि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Under the wish-fulfilling tree, the fruits that are asked for do appear. But the very desire with which one sits there matters; speak only after careful thought.

Whatever reply is given, the consequence returns in kind. Says Tuka, the gain or loss lies within one's own mind.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Under the wish-fulfilling tree, the fruits you ask for do appear. But the desire you sit with there is what matters. Speak only after careful thought. Whatever answer you give, its consequence comes back to you in kind. Tuka says: the gain and the loss lie within your own mind.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram takes the wishing tree, the kalpataru that grants whatever is asked, and turns it into a warning about the mind. Since it gives exactly what you wish for, your wish itself decides your fate, so one should think carefully before asking. What you put out returns in kind, like an echo. The point lands inward: God or the wishing tree only mirrors you, and so the real gain or loss of a life is shaped by the desires you carry in your own mind.

GATHA 2066

The Power of the Name

The Name, a fast color that never fades

मराठी मूळ

रंगलें या रंगें पालट न घरी । खेवलें अंतरीं पालटेना ॥१॥
सावळें निखळ कृष्णनाम ठसे । अंगसंगें कैसे शोभा देती ॥२॥
पवित्र जालें तें न लिपे विटाळा । नैदी बैसों मला आडवरी ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे काळें काळें केलें तोंड । प्रकाश अमंड देखोनियां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Dyed in this color, it never fades; what has been absorbed within does not change. The dark, pure name of Krishna leaves its mark, and its luster adorns all who carry it.

What has become sacred is untouched by pollution; it does not allow any stain to settle. Says Tuka, the face has been blackened with the dark beauty of Krishna, and seeing that unbroken radiance, there is only light.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Dyed in this color, it never fades. What has soaked into the heart does not change. The dark, pure name of Krishna sets its stamp, and its beauty shines on all who wear it. What has become sacred cannot be stained; it lets no defilement settle on it. Tuka says: my face is blackened, blackened with that dark beauty, and seeing the unbroken radiance, there is only light.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses the image of dyeing cloth: once the heart is steeped in the dark name of Krishna, the color is fast, it will never wash out or fade. That sacred mark cannot be polluted; no defilement can settle on what the Name has made holy. The seeming paradox of the close is deliberate: his face is blackened with the dark hue of Krishna, yet that very darkness is unbroken radiance, pure light. The dark stain of the Name is not a blemish but a beauty that shines.

GATHA 2067

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, our feet upon the head of death

मराठी मूळ

जगा काळ खाय । आह्मी माथां दिले पाय ॥१॥
 नाचों तेथें उभा राहे । जातां व्यंग करी साहे ॥२॥
 हरिच्या गुणें धाला । होता खात चि भुकेला ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हळु । जाला कढत शीतळु ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Death devours the world, but we have placed our feet upon its head. Wherever we dance, death stands still; when we walk past, it bears our passage without protest.

Satisfied by the virtues of Hari, death itself, once forever hungry, has been fed. Says Tuka, the one who was boiling hot has become cool and gentle.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Death devours the world. We have set our feet upon its head. Wherever we dance, death stands still. When we walk past, it bears our passing without a word. Filled full by the virtues of Hari, death, once forever hungry, has been fed. Tuka says: the one that was boiling hot has gone cool and gentle.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram declares that the devotee has conquered the very death that swallows the whole world, treading on its head as on a defeated enemy. Where the lovers of God dance, death itself halts and lets them pass without protest. The bold turn is that even death is satisfied by the virtues of Hari: the eternally hungry devourer is finally fed, and its scorching heat cools into something gentle. The Name does not just protect from death; it tames and contents death itself.

GATHA 2068

The Power of the Name

The Name as medicine, the only cure

मराठी मूळ

ब्रह्मरस घेई काढा । जेणें पीडा वारेल ॥१॥
 पथ्य नाम विठोबाचें । अणीक वाचे न सेवीं ॥२॥
 भवरोगाऐसैं जाय । आणीक काय क्षुल्लकें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे नव्हे बाधा । अणीक कदा भूतांची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Take this medicine of divine essence; it will cure your affliction. The proper diet is Vithoba's name; let nothing else touch your tongue.

When the disease of worldly existence itself is destroyed, what are all other petty ailments? Says Tuka, no other spirit or demon can cause harm after that.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Take this medicine of divine essence; it will end your suffering. The proper diet is Vithoba's name. Let nothing else touch your tongue. When the very disease of worldly existence is gone, what are all the petty ailments? Tuka says: after that, no other spirit or demon can harm you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prescribes the Name like a physician prescribing a cure: the divine essence is the medicine that ends suffering, and Vithoba's name is the strict diet, with nothing else allowed on the tongue. He frames worldly existence itself as the root disease, so once that is healed every lesser trouble loses its weight. The closing line extends the protection: with the great sickness cured, no other malign power, no spirit or demon, can do any harm. The whole abhanga reduces the cure for life to a single remedy, the Name.

GATHA 2069

The Saints

The saints' feet, the cure that heals

मराठी मूळ

अंगें अनुभव जाला मज । संतरजचरणांचा ॥१॥
 सुखी जालों या सेवनें । दुःख नेणें यावरी ॥२॥
 निर्माल्याचें तुळसीदळ । विष्णुजळ चरणींचें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने भावसार । करुनि फार मिश्रत ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have experienced in my own body the effect of the dust of the saints' feet. By that remedy, I have become happy; I know no sorrow after this.

The tulasi leaf from the offering, the sacred water from the Lord's feet. Says Tuka, mix these with the essence of devotion, and the cure is complete.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have felt it in my own body, the touch of the dust of the saints' feet. By taking this remedy I have become well. After this I know no sorrow. Take the tulasi leaf from the offering, take the water that washed the Lord's feet. Tuka says: mix these with the essence of devotion, and the cure is complete.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks of the company of the saints as a medicine he has tested on himself, not a theory. He says the dust of their feet, the tulasi from God's offering, the water poured over God's feet, taken together with real devotion, work a complete healing. The sickness he means is the sorrow of worldly life, and he reports that once cured he knows it no more. The point is that contact with the saints and with God is the only remedy that finishes the disease rather than easing it for a while.

GATHA 2070

The Nature of God

God the physician, paid in love

मराठी मूळ

वैद्य एक पंढरिराव । अंतर्भाव तो जाणे ॥१॥
 रोगाऐशा घाव्या वल्ली । जाणे जाली बाधा ते ॥२॥
 नेदी रुका वेचों मोल । पोहे बोल प्रीतीचे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने दयावंता । सदा चिंता दीनांची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The only true physician is the Lord of Pandhari; He alone knows the inner condition. He prescribes the right remedy for each ailment, knowing exactly where the affliction lies.

He does not charge even a coin; His currency is words of love. Says Tuka, that compassionate One always carries the poor in His thoughts.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is only one true physician, the Lord of Pandhari. He alone knows the inner condition. He gives the right herb for each disease, for he knows exactly where the harm lies. He charges no coin, asks no fee; his only payment is words of love. Tuka says: that compassionate one always carries the poor in his thoughts.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures Panduranga as the one doctor who diagnoses what no other can see, the affliction hidden inside a person. Because he reads the inner condition exactly, the remedy he gives always fits. The stakes are that no human healer can reach this sickness; only God can. And his price is not money but love, freely given, because he is forever turned toward the helpless and the poor.

GATHA 2071

The Nature of God

God the Friend of the Helpless

मराठी मूळ

करितां कोणाचें ही काज । नाहीं लाज देवासी ॥1॥
 बरे करावें हें काम । धरिलें नाम दीनबंधु ॥ ध्रु.॥
 करुनि अराणूक पाहे । भलत्या साहए व्हावया ॥2॥
 बोले तैसी करणी करी । तुका ह्मणे एक हरि ॥3॥ ॥4॥
 उभें चंद्रभागे तीरीं । कट धरोनियां करीं ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God feels no shame in doing anyone's work. He should do this work well, for He has taken the name Friend of the Helpless.

He watches for the chance to assist, ready to help in any way. Says Tuka, Hari alone both speaks and acts accordingly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God feels no shame to do anyone's work. He must do this work well, for he has taken the name Friend of the Helpless. He looks for the chance, ready to help in any way at all. He acts exactly as he speaks. Tuka says: Hari alone is like this. He stands on the bank of the Chandrabhaga, his hands resting on his hips.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reminds God of his own name: if he is called Friend of the Helpless, then he is bound to act like one, and he is not too proud to do even the lowliest person's work. Tukaram presses the claim that God watches for openings to help and that his deeds match his promises exactly, unlike human beings whose words and acts come apart. The closing image is Vitthal standing on the river bank at Pandhari, hands on hips, waiting, the Friend who keeps his post. The poem is half praise and half a held God to his word.

GATHA 2072

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, the feet on the brick

मराठी मूळ

पाउलें गोजिरीं । विटेवरी शोभलीं ॥१॥
 संचिताचा ठेवा । जोडी हातीं लागली ॥२॥
 रूप डोळ्यां आवडे । कीतिन श्रवणीं पवाडे ।
 मस्तक नावडे । उठों पायांवरोनि ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाम । ज्याचें नासी क्रोध काम ।
 हरी भवश्रम । उच्चारितां वाचेसी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Those beautiful feet shine upon the brick. The treasure of our destiny has come into our hands.
 The form delights the eyes; the fame resounds in the ears. My head does not wish to rise from those feet.
 Says Tuka, His name destroys desire and anger; merely uttering it frees the tongue from all bondage.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those lovely feet shine upon the brick. The treasure stored up by my past deeds has come into my hands.
 The form delights my eyes; the fame fills my ears. My head will not rise from those feet. Tuka says: his name destroys anger and desire. Speak it with the tongue, and the weariness of the world is taken away.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram stands at Pandhari and sees Vitthal's feet set on the brick, and he calls this sight the treasure his whole past has been saving up for him. Every sense is filled: his eyes by the form, his ears by the fame, and his bowed head refuses to lift from the feet. He then names what the Name itself does: spoken aloud, it burns away anger and desire and lifts the exhaustion of worldly existence. The poem moves from the seen feet to the spoken Name, both pointing to the same release.

GATHA 2073

The Power of the Name

The Name as our only wealth

मराठी मूळ

आह्मां हें चि भांडवल । ह्मणों विठ्ठल विठ्ठल ॥१॥
 सुखें तरों भवनदी । संग वैष्णवांची मांदी ॥२॥
 बाखराचें वाण । सांडूं हें जेवूं जेवण ॥३॥
 न लगे वारंवार । तुका ह्मणे वेरझार ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Our only capital is to say Vitthal, Vitthal. We will cross the river of worldly existence in bliss, surrounded by the company of the Vaishnavas.

Let us set aside the stale fare and eat this true feast. Says Tuka, there is no need to keep going back and forth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This is our only capital: to say Vitthal, Vitthal. We will cross the river of worldly life in joy, in the crowd of the Vaishnavas. Let us throw away the stale food and eat this true meal. Tuka says: there is no need to keep going back and forth again and again.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says the devotees own nothing else worth counting; the one wealth they trade on is the Name, Vitthal. With that and the company of fellow Vaishnavas they cross the river of birth and death gladly rather than in fear. He contrasts two foods: the stale fare of worldly pursuits and the true feast of the Name, and tells us to drop the first for the second. The last line names the stakes, that this meal ends the endless coming and going, the rounds of birth, with no need to repeat the journey.

GATHA 2074

Prayers

Prayer, keep my mind from wandering

मराठी मूळ

आतां माझ्या भावा । अंतराय नको देवा ॥१॥
 आलें भागा तें करितों । तुझें नाम उच्चारितों ॥२॥
 दृढ माझें मन। येथें राखावें बांधोन ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे वाटे । नको फुटों देऊं फांटे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O God, do not place any obstacle before my devotion now. I do what comes to me: I utter Your name.

Keep my mind firmly anchored here; do not let it branch off in other directions. Says Tuka, do not let it wander astray.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now, O God, put no obstacle in the way of my devotion. I do what falls to me to do: I speak your name. Hold my mind firm, keep it bound here. Tuka says: on the road, do not let it break off into side paths.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays not for things but for an unbroken devotion, asking God to remove whatever would block it. His own part is simple and he is already doing it: he keeps uttering the Name. What he cannot manage alone is his restless mind, so he asks God to bind it in place and not let it scatter down side roads. The stakes are that the practice fails not from lack of effort but from a mind that branches off, and only God can hold it steady.

GATHA 2075

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the begging flatterer

मराठी मूळ

काय देवापाशीं उणें । हिंडे दारोदारीं सुनें ॥१॥
 करी अक्षरांची आटी । एके कवडी च साटीं ॥२॥
 निंदी कोणां स्तवी । चिंतातुर सदा जीवीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने भांड । जलो जळो त्याचें तोंड ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What is lacking with God that one must wander door to door like a stray? The pandit toils over letters and syllables for the sake of a single penny. He slanders some and flatters others, always anxious at heart.

Says Tuka, such a flatterer: may his mouth be cursed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What is lacking with God, that a man wanders door to door like a stray dog? He strains over letters and syllables, all for a single cowrie shell. He slanders one man and flatters another, his heart always eaten by worry. Tuka says: such a wrangler, may his mouth be burned away.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strikes at the scholar who uses his learning to beg, going from door to door, grinding through holy words for the smallest coin. The poem asks: if God lacks nothing, why grovel before men? The pattern he names is the cycle of slander and flattery that such begging breeds, and the constant anxiety it leaves in the heart. The harsh closing curse is aimed at that grasping, two-faced use of the tongue, not at any one person; it warns the listener against turning sacred words into a tool for gain.

GATHA 2076

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, ask only from God

मराठी मूळ

मागणें तें मागों देवा । करुं भक्ती त्याची सेवा ॥१॥
 काय उणे तयापाशीं । रिद्धिसिद्धी ज्याच्या दासी ॥२॥
 तुका ह्याने विश्वंभर । ज्याच्यानें हें चराचर ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let us ask from God alone; let us serve Him with devotion. What is lacking in His treasury? Prosperity and supernatural powers are His handmaids.

Says Tuka, He is the Sustainer of the universe, by whose power all this creation moves.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let us ask what we ask from God, and serve him with devotion. What is lacking in his keeping? Wealth and the powers are his serving-maids. Tuka says: he is the one who holds the whole world, by whom all this moving and unmoving creation lives.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says to bring every request to God alone and to serve him with love rather than begging from men. His reason is that God's house lacks nothing: even prosperity and the supernatural powers, which people chase so hard, are mere handmaids waiting on him. Since God sustains the whole universe, the moving and the unmoving alike, he is the only worthy source to turn to. The point is to set the heart on the master, not on the maids who serve him.

GATHA 2077

The Nature of God

God serves the one who wants nothing

मराठी मूळ

चित्तीं नाहीं आस । त्याचा पांडुरंग दास ॥१॥
 असे भक्तांचिये घरीं । काम न संगतां करी ॥२॥
 अनाथाचा बंधु । असे अंगीं हा संबंधु ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे भावें । देवा सत्ता राबवावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Panduranga becomes the servant of one who has no desire in the chitta. He dwells in the homes of the devoted and does their work without being asked.

He is the kinsman of the destitute; this bond runs through His very being. Says Tuka, through devotion, one can command God to serve.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one who keeps no craving in his heart, Panduranga becomes his servant. He stays in the homes of the devoted and does their work without being asked. He is the brother of the helpless; this bond is bound into his very body. Tuka says: through love, you can set God to work for you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram states the paradox at the heart of devotion: God makes himself the servant of the one who has emptied his heart of desire. To such a person God comes unbidden, living in the house and doing the work before it is even asked. The reason is that being kin to the helpless is woven into his very nature, not an act he chooses. The closing claim is bold and deliberate, that pure love itself gives the devotee a kind of authority over God; the price of that power is wanting nothing for oneself.

GATHA 2078

Worldly Life

Worldly life, the company of the harsh

मराठी मूळ

कर्कशसंगति । दुःख उदंड फजिती ॥1॥
 नाहीं इह ना परलोक । मजुर दिसे जैसैं रंक ॥ध्रु॥
 वचन सेंटावरी । त्याचें ठेवूनि धिक्कारी ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे पायीं बेडी । पडिली कपाळीं कुंहाडी ॥3॥ ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The company of the harsh brings immense suffering and disgrace. There is neither fulfillment here nor in the world beyond; one looks like a wretched laborer.

They keep one's word on a leash and then dishonor it. Says Tuka, it is as if fetters are on the feet and an axe upon the head.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The company of a harsh person brings heaps of suffering and disgrace. There is nothing in it for this world or the next; you look like a wretched hired laborer. They put your word on a leash and then throw it back at you in scorn. Tuka says: it is as if there are fetters on your feet and an axe upon your head.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns against keeping company with a cruel, abrasive person, naming the cost plainly: endless trouble and humiliation, with no gain here or hereafter. In such company you are reduced to a servant whose own words are held against you and flung back in contempt. He ends with two hard images, feet in fetters and an axe over the head, to show how trapped and endangered such a bond leaves you. The lesson is about the pattern of harsh company, urging the listener to examine whom they tie their life to.

GATHA 2079

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the seed that seems lost

मराठी मूळ

बीज पेरे सेतीं । मग गाडेवरी वाहाती ॥1॥
 वांयां गेलें ऐसैं दिसे । लाभ त्याचे अंगीं वसे ॥ध्रु॥
 पाल्याची जतन । तरि प्रांतीं येती कण ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे आळा । उदक देतां लाभे फळा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A seed is sown in the field, and then the harvest is carried away in carts. It seems as though the seed was lost, yet the profit dwells within it.

If the crop is tended carefully, grain will come at the harvest. Says Tuka, when you water the plant with care, the fruit is your reward.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The seed is sown in the field, and later the harvest is carried off in carts. It looks as though the seed was thrown away, but the gain is hidden inside it. Tend the leaves with care, and at the end the grain will come. Tuka says: water the bed of the plant, and the fruit is your reward.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses the farmer's seed to teach how spiritual effort works. The seed buried in the soil looks lost, just as devotion or sacrifice can look like waste, yet the whole harvest is folded inside that apparent loss. The point of the unspoken frame is patience and tending: water the plant, guard the growing leaves, and the grain arrives in its season. What seems given up is in fact invested, and the fruit comes only to those who keep tending it through the time when nothing shows.

GATHA 2080

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, know the essential thing

मराठी मूळ

जाणावें तें सार । नाही तरी दगा फार ॥१॥
डोळे झांकिलिया रवि । नाही ऐसा होय जेवीं ॥२॥
बहुथोडणा आड । निवारितां लाभें जाड ॥३॥
तुका ह्याने खरें । नेलें हातींचे अंधारें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Know what is essential; otherwise, the deception is great. Just as closing your eyes does not make the sun disappear.

Much or little, when you clear the obstruction, the thick gains are revealed. Says Tuka, what was in the hand has been carried off by darkness.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Know what is essential, or the loss is great. Closing your eyes does not make the sun cease to be. Much or little, when you clear away the obstruction, the gain is large. Tuka says: what was already in your hand has been carried off by the dark.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram urges the listener to grasp the one essential thing, warning that to miss it is a heavy loss. His image is sharp: shutting your eyes does not put out the sun, so refusing to see the truth does not make it go away, it only blinds you to it. Clear away the obstruction, large or small, and great gain is revealed. The last line lands the stakes: through that willful darkness a person can lose even what was already in his hand, the truth that was right there to be seen.

GATHA 2081

Worldly Life

Worldly life, the sunk boat

मराठी मूळ

मुळीं नेणपण । जाला तरी अभिमान ॥१॥
 वायां जावें हें चि खरें । केलें तेणें चि प्रकारें ॥२॥
 अराणूक नाहीं कधीं । जाली तरि भेदबुद्ध ॥३॥
 अंतरली नाव । तुका ह्मणे नाहीं ठाव ॥३॥ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

From the very root, there is ignorance; then pride grows from it. To go to waste in this way is the certain outcome.

There has never been any rest; once the sense of separateness takes hold, division follows. Says Tuka, the boat has sunk, and now there is no ground to stand on.

IN PLAIN WORDS

At the very root there is ignorance; from it pride grows. To go to waste in this way is the one sure thing. There is never any rest. Once the sense of separateness takes hold, division follows. Tuka says: the boat has sunk, and now there is no ground to stand on.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram traces worldly ruin back to its source and names each step. It begins with ignorance, and from ignorance comes pride; that, he says, is the certain way a life is wasted. There is never any rest in it, because once you feel yourself separate, division and conflict follow without end. He closes with the image of a boat that has sunk: the support is gone, and there is no firm ground left to stand on.

GATHA 2082

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the fair of life

मराठी मूळ

संवसारसांते आले हो आडका । तुटीचें ते नका केणें भरुं ॥१॥
 लाभाचा हा काळ अवघे विचारा । पारखी ते करा साहए येथें ॥२॥
 शृंगारिलें दिसे न कळें अंतर । गोविला पदर उगवेना ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे खोटें गुंफतां विसारें । हातिंचिया खरें हातीं घ्यावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Listen, all who have come to the fair of worldly life. Do not fill the gaps with worthless goods.

This is the time of profit; use your discernment and be wise. What is displayed looks beautiful, but the inside is unknown; the entangled end cannot be freed.

Says Tuka, when you invest in what is false, hold firmly to what is real in your own hands.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Listen, all of you who have come to the fair of worldly life. Do not fill your gaps with worthless goods. This is the time for profit; think it all through and be wise here. What is on display looks beautiful, but you cannot see the inside; the tangled end will not come free. Tuka says: when you invest in what is false, hold firmly to what is real in your own hands.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures human life as a busy fair, a marketplace where you have come to trade. The warning is against bad bargains: do not stuff your lack with worthless goods just because they glitter. He says this is the season for real profit, so use discernment now, while there is time. The goods on display look fine on the outside but you cannot see what is within, and once entangled you cannot get free. The real holding is God, the one true thing to keep gripped in your own hand.

GATHA 2083

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the right path home

मराठी मूळ

सारावीं लिगाडें धरावा सुपंथ । जावें उसंतीत हळूहळू ॥१॥
 पुढें जातियाचे उमटले माग । भांबावलें जग आडरानें ॥२॥
 वेचल्याचा पाहे वरावरि झाडा । बळाचा निधडा पुढिलिया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जैसी दाखवावी वाणी । ते द्यावी भरोनी शेवट तों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Settle your accounts, choose the right path, and proceed slowly and steadily. The tracks of those who went ahead are visible; the world has lost its way in the wilderness.

Check the balance of what has been spent along the way; be bold on behalf of those who went before. Says Tuka, whatever promise your tongue has spoken, honor it through to the very end.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Settle your tangled accounts, take the right road, and go slowly and steadily. The tracks of those who went ahead are clear; the world has lost its way in the wilderness. Check the balance of what you have spent along the road; be firm and strong for the sake of those ahead. Tuka says: whatever your tongue has promised, fill it up and honor it through to the very end.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks like a guide on a long journey. First clear away your entanglements, find the right path, and travel it patiently rather than in a rush. The saints who went before have left visible tracks to follow, while the rest of the world strays lost in trackless country. Keep checking your accounts, what you have spent and what remains, and stay strong on behalf of those still on the road. Above all, keep your word: whatever you have vowed, carry it through to the end without falling short.

GATHA 2084

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the dull pretender

मराठी मूळ

बुद्धमंद शिरीं । भार फजिती पदरीं ॥१॥
जाय तेथें अपमान । पावे हाणी थुंकी जन ॥२॥
खरियाचा पाड । मार्गे लावावें लिगाड ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे करी । वर्म नेणें भरोवरी ॥३॥ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The dull-witted carry a load on their head and disgrace in their lap. Wherever they go, they face insult; people strike them and spit on them.

The value of what is genuine is shown by the worthless thing trailing behind. Says Tuka, the one who does not know the secret keeps trying and failing.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The dull-witted carry a load on the head and disgrace in the lap. Wherever such a one goes there is insult; he is struck, and people spit on him. The worth of the genuine is shown by the worthless thing trailing behind it. Tuka says: the one who does not know the secret keeps trying, and keeps failing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the person who labors hard yet stays foolish, weighed down by burdens and bringing shame on himself. Everywhere he goes he meets insult and contempt, because effort without understanding goes nowhere. Genuine worth shows itself plainly, just as a worthless thing dragging behind exposes what it is attached to. The point is turned inward: without knowing the secret, the inner heart of the matter, all the striving in the world only repeats the same failure. Look to whether you actually understand, not just how hard you push.

GATHA 2085

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, slander as great sin

मराठी मूळ

पूर्वजांसी नकान । जाणें तें आडका ॥१॥
निंदा करावी चाहाडी । मनीं धरुनि आवडी ॥२॥
मात्रागमना ऐसी।जोडी पातकांची रासी ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे वाट । कुंभपाकाची ते नीट॥
वेडीं तें वेडीं बहुत चि वेडीं । चाखतां गोडी चवी नेणे ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Know this: slandering others and carrying tales with relish sends one's ancestors to hell. Such gossip accumulates sins equal to the gravest transgressions.

Says Tuka, that path leads straight to the cauldron of hell.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Know this, and listen: to slander others and carry tales with relish drags one's own ancestors down to hell. Such gossip piles up a heap of sins, as grave as the gravest transgressions. Tuka says: that path leads straight to the boiling cauldron of hell. Fools, fools, utter fools: tasting the sweetness, they cannot tell the flavor.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram weighs slander and gleeful tale-bearing as a serious sin, not a small fault. He says relishing the fault-finding heaps up transgression equal to the heaviest sins, and even disgraces one's own forebears. The road of such gossip, he warns, leads straight to the cauldron of hell. The closing line names the strange blindness of it: people taste the pleasure of running others down without ever recognizing what they are really swallowing. The examination is meant to fall on the relish itself, the appetite for finding fault, not on hatred of any particular person.

GATHA 2086

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the self-blind fool

मराठी मूळ

देहा लावी वात । पालव घाली जाली रात ॥1॥
 कडिये मूल भोंवतें भोंये । मोकलुनि रडे धाये ॥2॥
 लेंकरें वित्त पुसे जगा । माझा गोहो कोण तो सांगा ॥3॥
 आपुली शुद्ध जया नाही । आणिकांची ते जाणे काई ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसे जन । नकान जातां राखे कोण ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The fool lights a fire upon his own body and then calls for help when the night falls. The child on the hip looks around while the mother, having set it down, runs about crying.

Like children asking the world, who is my protector? One who has no awareness of oneself, how can that one know anything of another? Says Tuka, when such people are headed to hell, who will save them?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The fool sets his own body on fire, then calls for help when night has fallen. The child on her hip, she sets down on the ground, and runs about crying, looking everywhere for it. Like children, people ask the world: tell me, who is my protector? One who has no awareness of himself, how can he know anything of another? Tuka says: when such people are headed to hell, who will save them?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strings together images of people who cause their own trouble and then look outside for rescue. One sets fire to his own body and only cries for help once it is dark; another carries a child on her hip, puts it down, and runs about weeping while searching for it. So people beg the world to tell them who their protector is, never seeing it is near at hand. The root problem is self-ignorance: one who has no awareness of his own self cannot understand anything truly. The remedy is to turn and look within, since no outside savior reaches the one who will not.

GATHA 2087

The Nature of God

Nature of God, you reap what you sow

मराठी मूळ

आवडीचें दान देतो नारायण । बाहे उभारोनि राहिलासे ॥१॥
 जें जयासी रुचे तें करी समोर । सर्वज्ञ उदार मायबाप ॥२॥
 ठायीं पडिलिया तें चि लागे खावें । ठायींचे चि घ्यावें विचारुनि ॥३॥
 बीज पेरुनियां तें चि घ्यावें फळ । डोरलीस केळ केंचें लागे ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा कांहीं बोल नाही । तुझा तूं चि पाहीं शत्रु सखा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Narayana gives each person what they desire; He stands with open arms, waiting. Whatever pleases each one, He places before them; the all-knowing, generous Lord is our Father and Mother.

But whatever you have sown in your own place, that is what you must eat; choose wisely and take only what belongs to you. You sow a seed and harvest that same fruit; a vine cannot bear bananas.

Says Tuka, God is not to blame in this; You are Your own friend and Your own enemy.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Narayana gives each one the gift of what they love; He stands with His arms held open. Whatever pleases each person, He sets before them; generous to all, He is mother and father. But whatever is sown in your place is just what you must eat; take only what is yours, and choose with care. You sow a seed and you harvest that same fruit; how can a vine bear bananas? Tuka says: God is in no way to blame. See for yourself, you are your own enemy and your own friend.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram holds two truths together: God's open-handed giving and the strict justice of cause and effect. Narayana, like a mother and father, stands with open arms and gives each person what they truly desire, holding nothing back. Yet what you harvest is exactly what you sowed; you eat only what grew in your own field, and a vine cannot suddenly yield bananas. So God is not to be blamed for what your life brings; the giving meets the seed you planted. The hard, freeing conclusion: you yourself, by what you choose and sow, are your own enemy or your own friend.

GATHA 2088

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the hollow renunciant

मराठी मूळ

अडचणीचें दार । बाहेर माजी पैस फार ॥1॥
 काय करावें तें मौन्य । दाही दिशा हिंडे मन ॥ध्रु॥
 बाहेर दावी वेश । माजी वासनेचे लेश ॥2॥
 नाही इंद्रियां दमन । काय मांडिला दुकान ॥3॥
 सारविलें निकें । वरि माजी अवघें फिकें ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे अंतीं । कांहीं न लगे चि हातीं ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The entrance is narrow, but inside, the space is vast. What use is outward silence when the mind wanders in all ten directions? The appearance outside is of a renunciant, but inside lurk the traces of desire.

Without mastery of the senses, what is the point of setting up a shop? The surface is polished clean, but inside everything is hollow. Says Tuka, in the end, nothing remains in hand.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The doorway is narrow, but inside there is a great deal of room. What use is this outward silence, while the mind wanders in all ten directions? Outside he shows the dress of a renouncer; inside lie the traces of desire. With no mastery over the senses, why has he set up shop? The surface is polished and fine, but inside it is all empty. Tuka says: in the end, nothing comes into the hand.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram exposes the gap between religious appearance and inner reality. A man keeps an outward vow of silence, yet his mind roams in every direction; he wears the robe of a renouncer while desire still lives inside him. Putting on the costume of holiness without conquering the senses is like opening a shop with no real goods to sell. The outside is buffed clean and impressive, but it is hollow within. And what is hollow yields nothing at the end: nothing real comes into the hand. The question to ask is of one's own inside, not the display.

GATHA 2089

*The Necessity of Experience**Spiritual experience, only the desireless see Rama*

मराठी मूळ

लय लक्षूनियां जालों ह्यणती देव । तो ही नव्हे भाव सत्य जाणा ॥1॥
 जालों बहुश्रुत न लगे आतां कांहीं । नको राहूं ते ही निश्चितीनें ॥ध्रु॥
 तपें दान काय मानिसी विश्वास । बीज फळ त्यास आहे पुढें ॥2॥
 कर्म आचरण यातीचा स्वगुण । विशेष तो गुण काय तेथें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्यणे जरी होईल निष्काम । तरि च होय राम देखे डोळां ॥4॥ ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who attained absorption and were called divine, know that even this is not the ultimate truth. Those who became greatly learned and say they need nothing more should not rest in that certainty either.

If you place your faith in austerities and charity, know that their fruit still lies ahead. The conduct and qualities that come with one's birth, what is truly special in those? Says Tuka, only if one becomes truly desireless will Rama appear before the eyes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who fixed on absorption and were called gods: know truly, that is not yet the real state. Those who became greatly learned and say they need nothing more should not rest in that certainty either. Do you put your trust in austerities and charity? Their fruit still lies ahead. Conduct, observance, the qualities that come with your birth: what is so special there? Tuka says: only when one becomes free of desire does Rama at last appear before the eyes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tests one resting place after another and finds each one short of the goal. Deep meditative absorption, praised as divine, is still not the final truth; wide learning is no place to settle in confidence. Austerities and charity are not nothing, but their reward is still future fruit, not the seeing itself. Even pious conduct and the virtues handed to you by birth carry no special claim. The one condition he keeps for last is the deepest: only the heart truly emptied of desire actually sees Rama. The vision waits not on achievement but on letting go of wanting.

GATHA 2090

Prayers

Prayer, lift me onto Your hip

मराठी मूळ

पुरली धांव कडिये घेई । पुढें पायीं न चलवीं ॥१॥
 कृपाळुवे पांडुरंगे । अंगसंगे जिवलगे ॥२॥
 अवघी निवारावी भूक । अवघ्या दुःख जन्माचें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बोलवेना । लावीं स्तनां विश्वरें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The running is over; take me upon Your hip, O Panduranga. Do not make me walk any further on my own feet, O merciful, beloved companion.

Satisfy all my hunger, all the suffering of these many births. Says Tuka, I can no longer speak; press me to Your breast, O Mother of the universe.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My running is over; take me up onto Your hip. Do not make me walk any further on my own feet. O merciful Panduranga, joined to me body to body, my dearest one. Take away all my hunger, all the sorrow of these many births. Tuka says: I can speak no more. Hold me to Your breast, O Mother of the universe.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays as a worn-out child to a mother who is also God. He has run as far as he can and asks to be carried, lifted onto the hip, no longer forced to walk on his own feet. He calls Panduranga merciful and beloved, close as body to body, and asks that all hunger and all the suffering gathered across many births be ended at once. At the close his words run out, and the appeal becomes wholly bodily: hold me to Your breast, mother of all the worlds. The whole prayer is a surrender of effort into being held.

GATHA 2091

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the Name is enough

मराठी मूळ

जें जें मना वाटे गोड । तें तें कोड पुरविसी ॥१॥
 आतां तूं चि बाहणात्कारीं । अवघ्यापरी जालासी ॥२॥
 नाहीं सायासाचें काम । घेतां नाम आवडी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सर्वसांगे । पांडुरंगे दयाळे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whatever the mind finds sweet, You fulfill that very wish. Now You have become everything externally as well; You have taken every form.

There is no need for effort; just taking Your name with love is enough. Says Tuka, O compassionate Panduranga, You provide everything that is needed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever the mind finds sweet, that very wish You fulfill. Now You have become everything on the outside too; You have taken every form. There is no work, no strain, in it; just take the Name with love. Tuka says: O compassionate Panduranga, You give everything that is needed.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a God who answers the heart's desires and then fills the whole world besides. Whatever the mind finds sweet, Panduranga grants, and has come to wear every outward form as well, so the devotee meets Him everywhere. The way to Him asks no hard labor or technique; it is enough to take the Name with love. The closing note is gratitude: the compassionate Lord supplies all that is needed, so the path is one of ease and trust rather than effort.

GATHA 2092

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, worship in everything seen

मराठी मूळ

जेथें माझी दृष्ट जाय । तेथें पाय भावीन ॥१॥
असेन या समाधानें । पूजा मनें करीन ॥२॥
अवघा च अवघे देसी। सुख घेविसी संपन्न ॥२॥
तुका ह्मणे बंधन नाही । ऐसें कांहीं ते करूं ॥३॥ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Wherever my gaze falls, I will see Your feet there. I will rest in this contentment and worship You with my mind.

You give everything of Yourself; You make us enjoy all abundance. Says Tuka, let us do whatever does not create bondage.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Wherever my gaze falls, there I will imagine Your feet. I will stay in this contentment and worship You with my mind. You give all of Yourself; You let us taste full and abundant joy. Tuka says: let us do only what does not make bondage.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns ordinary seeing into worship. Wherever his eyes land, he resolves to picture God's feet there, so that the whole visible world becomes a place of devotion. Settled in that contentment, he offers worship inwardly, with the mind, needing no special setting. He thanks the Lord, who gives Himself fully and lets the devotee taste rich and complete joy. The closing line draws the rule out of it: let us choose only what does not tie us down, the kind of practice and life that frees rather than binds.

GATHA 2093

Devotion to Vitthal

Praise of Pundalik, heaven on earth

मराठी मूळ

नातुडे जो कवणे परी । उभा केला विटेवरी ॥१॥
 भला भला पुंडलिका । मानलासी जनलोकां ॥२॥
 कोण्या काळें सुखा । ऐशा कोण पावता ॥३॥
 अवघा आणिला परिवार । गोपी गोपाळांचा भार ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He who cannot be attained by any means has been made to stand upon the brick. Praise to Pundalik, who has won the admiration of all people.

At what time or age could anyone have received such happiness? He brought the entire divine entourage: the gopis, the cowherds, all of them. Says Tuka, blessed is this event; Vaikuntha itself has been brought down to earth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one no means can reach has been made to stand upon the brick. Well done, Pundalik; all people honor you. In what age did anyone ever come to such happiness as this? He brought the whole family down, the gopis, the cowherds, the whole crowd of them. Tuka says: blessed is this; he has brought Vaikuntha onto the earth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram praises Pundalik, the devotee whose love drew Vitthal to Pandhari and held him standing on a brick. He marvels that the God no method or austerity can grasp now stands within plain reach. He counts it a happiness no other age received, because the entire heavenly household came down with him: the gopis, the cowherds, all of it. The claim Tukaram lands is that one devotee's love brought Vaikuntha itself onto the earth, so the highest heaven is here, at the brick, not far above.

GATHA 2094

The Saints

Praise of Pundalik, the open treasury

मराठी मूळ

अवघे चुकविले सायास । तप रासी जीवा नास ॥१॥
 जीव देऊनियां बळी । अवघीं तारिलीं दुर्बळीं । केला भूमंडळीं । माजी थोर पवाडा ॥२॥
 कांहीं न मगे याची गती । लुटवितो जगा हातीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे भक्तराजा । कोण वर्णी पार तुझा ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Pundalik spared everyone all efforts, the penances and mortifications that destroy the jiva. By offering his own life in sacrifice, he delivered all the weak and helpless; he performed the greatest deed on this earth.

He asks for nothing in return; he lets the whole world plunder the treasure freely. Says Tuka, O prince of devotees, who can measure your greatness?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He spared everyone all the toil, the heaps of penance that wear the soul to nothing. Offering his own life as the price, he carried across all the weak and helpless. On this whole earth he performed the greatest deed. He asks nothing back; he lets the world plunder the wealth from his hands. Tuka says: O prince of devotees, who can speak the limit of you?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram honors Pundalik for opening a way to God that costs the seeker nothing. The old road was penance and mortification, austerities that grind the soul down; Pundalik spared everyone that toil by paying the price himself. Tukaram pictures him handing out the treasure freely, asking nothing in return, letting the whole world plunder it. The point is that grace is now available without earning, and the saint who made it so is beyond measuring.

GATHA 2095

The Nature of God

God bound to his devotees

मराठी मूळ

प्रमाण हें त्याच्या बोला । देव भक्तांचा अंकिला॥१॥
 न पुसतां जातां नये । खालीं बैसतां ही भिये ॥२॥
 अवघा त्याचा होत । जीव भावाही सहित ॥३॥
 वदे उपचाराची वाणी । कांहीं माग ह्मणऊनि ॥४॥
 उदासीनाच्या लागें । तुका ह्मणे धांवे मार्गे॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This is the proof, from the mouths of devotees: God is bound to His devotees. Without being asked, He cannot leave; even sitting down, He is anxious.

He gives Himself entirely, along with His very life and love. He speaks courteous words, asking: please, tell Me what you desire.

Says Tuka, He runs after those who are truly indifferent to the world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Here is the proof, in the words of the devotees: God is the servant of his devotees. Without their leave he cannot go; even to sit down he is afraid. He becomes wholly theirs, his very life and love and all. He speaks the words of a servant, saying, ask me for something. Tuka says: he runs after the ones who want nothing from the world.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram states a reversal that the devotees themselves vouch for: God is bound to those who love him, almost their servant. He pictures Vitthal unable to leave without their permission, anxious even to sit, giving himself over completely, and pressing them to name a wish. Then comes the sharp turn: the ones he chases hardest are precisely the ones who ask for nothing, who have grown indifferent to the world. The lesson is that wanting nothing is what draws God most, because then the love is for him and not for what he can give.

GATHA 2096

The Nature of God

God repays the desireless

मराठी मूळ

कांहीं न मागती देवा । त्यांची करुं धांवे सेवा ॥१॥
 हळूहळू फेडी ऋण । होऊनियां रुपें दीन ॥२॥
 होऊं न सके वेगळा । क्षण एक त्यां निराळा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who ask nothing of God, He rushes to serve them. Slowly and humbly He repays His debt to them, taking on a lowly form.

He cannot bear to be separated from them for even a single moment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who ask nothing of God, he runs to serve them. Slowly he pays off his debt, taking on a lowly form. He cannot make himself separate from them, not for a single moment.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram extends the same reversal: the devotees who demand nothing are the ones God hurries to serve. He imagines God treating their love as a debt he owes, repaying it little by little while taking a humble, lowly form to do it. And he cannot bear to be apart from them even for a moment. The claim is that desirelessness does not push God away; it binds him close, until he becomes the one who serves and will not leave.

GATHA 2097

Faith and Trust

Faith, no need to ask

मराठी मूळ

जाणे अंतरिंचा भाव । तो चि करितो उपाव ॥१॥
 न लगे सांगावें मांगावें ॥
 जीवें भावें अनुसरावें । अविनाश घ्यावें । फळ धीर धरोनि ॥२॥
 बाळा न मागतां भोजन । माता घाली पाचारून ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तरी । एकीं लंघियेले गिरी ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He who knows the inmost desire devises the right remedy. There is no need to ask or beg; simply follow Him with life and jiva.

Hold patience and receive the imperishable fruit. Just as a mother calls her child and feeds it without being asked.

Says Tuka, by such faith alone, some have leaped over mountains.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He knows the desire within, and he himself makes the remedy. There is no need to tell him or to beg. Follow him with life and heart, and take the imperishable fruit, holding patience. A mother feeds her child without being asked; she calls it to her. Tuka says: by this, some have leaped over mountains.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram counsels a trust that does not need to spell out its requests. God already knows the inmost wish and arranges what is needed, so the work is not asking but following him with one's whole life and waiting patiently for a fruit that does not perish. He gives the homely image of a mother who calls her child and feeds it before it can ask. The promise he lands is that such faith carries people over impossible obstacles, leaping mountains, because the doing is left to God.

GATHA 2098

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the secret given by the saints

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी नाचों तेणें सुखें । वाऊं टाळी गातों मुखें ॥१॥

देव कृपेचा कोवळा । शरणागता पाळी लळा ॥२॥

आह्मां जाला हा निर्धार । मागें तारिलें अपार ॥३॥

तुका ह्याने संतीं । वर्म दिलें आह्मां हातीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We dance in that joy, clapping our hands and singing with our lips. God is tender with compassion; He nurtures the devotion of those who surrender.

This has become our firm conviction: in the past, He saved countless souls. Says Tuka, the saints have placed the secret directly in our hands.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We dance in that joy, we clap our hands, we sing with our mouths. God is tender with mercy; he tends the love of those who take refuge. This has become our settled conviction: he has saved countless souls before. Tuka says: the saints have placed the secret in our hands.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the joy of singing and dancing the Name, and grounds it in confidence rather than mood. God, tender with mercy, nurses the devotion of anyone who surrenders, the way one tends a small child. Their certainty rests on memory: he has rescued countless souls already, so he will not fail now. And the whole secret of this, Tukaram says, was not invented by them but handed to them by the saints, which is why they can dance without doubt.

GATHA 2099

Ecstasy and Joy

Fearlessness, the Name at the throat

मराठी मूळ

जालों निर्भर मानसीं । ह्मणऊनि कळलासी ॥१॥
 तुझे ह्मणविती त्यांस । भय चिंता नाहीं आस ॥२॥
 चुकविसी पाश । गर्भवासयातना ॥३॥
 तुझें जाणोनियां वर्म । कंठीं धरियेलें नाम ॥४॥ ॥७॥
 तुका ह्मणे तेणें सुखें । विसरलों जन्मदुःख ॥४॥ ॥७॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My mind has become utterly fearless, and through that fearlessness, I have come to know You. Those who are called Yours know no fear, no anxiety, no worldly desire.

You free them from the noose of birth, from the torments of the womb. Knowing Your secret, I have held Your name at my throat.

Says Tuka, in that joy, I have forgotten the suffering of birth itself.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My mind has become without fear, and so I have come to know you. Those who are called yours have no fear, no worry, no craving. You cut away the snare, the torment of being born in the womb. Knowing your secret, I have held your name at my throat. Tuka says: in that joy, I have forgotten the suffering of birth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram links fearlessness and knowledge: only when the mind let go of fear did it come to know God. He says those reckoned as God's own carry no dread, no anxiety, no craving, because God cuts the noose of rebirth and the agony of the womb. The secret he names is simple: he keeps the Name lodged at his throat, always ready. The result he lands is that the whole pain of being born has been forgotten in the joy of holding that Name.

GATHA 2100

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the pain of slander against God

मराठी मूळ

नको दुष्टसंग । पडे भजनामधीं भंग ॥1॥
 काय विचार देखिला । सांग माझा तो विठ्ठला ॥ध्रु॥
 तुज निषेधितां । मज न साहे सर्वथा ॥2॥
 एका माझ्या जीवें । वाद करुं कोणासवें॥3॥
 तुझे वणूष गुण । कीं हे राखों दुष्टजन ॥4॥
 काय करुं एका । मुखें सांग ह्याणे तुका ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not keep the company of the wicked; it brings disruption to devotion. Tell me, O Vitthal, what course of action do You see? I cannot bear it when someone speaks against You.

With my single life, how shall I argue with everyone? Shall I praise Your virtues, or shall I guard against these wicked people? Says Tuka, tell me, what shall I do with this one mouth?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not keep wicked company; it breaks the worship apart. Tell me, O Vitthal, what plan do you see? When someone denies you, I cannot bear it at all. With one life, how can I argue against everyone? Shall I sing your virtues, or shall I keep guarding against these wicked men? Tuka says: tell me, what can I do with one mouth?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram brings a real grievance to Vitthal: bad company wrecks his devotion, and he cannot stand to hear God denied or insulted. He feels outnumbered, one life and one mouth set against a crowd of mockers, and torn between two tasks. He cannot both praise God's glories and fight off the slanderers at the same time. The prayer asks God himself for a plan, and points the listener inward: notice how the company you keep can break your worship, and how little one person can do alone against it.

GATHA 2101

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the simple road to Vaikuntha

मराठी मूळ

टाळघोळ सुख नामाचा गजर । घोषें जेजेकार ब्रह्मानंदु ॥१॥
 गरुडटके दिंडी पताकांचे भार । आनंद अपार ब्रह्मादिकां ॥२॥
 आनंदें वैष्णव जाती लोटांगणीं । एक एकाहुनि भद्रजाति ॥३॥
 तेणें सुखें सुटे पाषाणां पाझर । नष्ट खळ नर शुद्ध होती ॥४॥ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सोपें वैकुंठवासी जातां । रामकृष्ण कथा हे ची वाट ॥४॥ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The bliss of cymbals, the ecstasy of the name chanted aloud, the shouts of triumph in divine joy. With Garuda-pillars, processions, and rows of banners, endless delight comes even to Brahma and the gods.

In ecstasy, the Vaishnavas fall prostrate, each one nobler than the last. In such bliss, even stones begin to melt; the wicked and the cruel become purified.

Says Tuka, the path to Vaikuntha is simple; the sacred story of Rama and Krishna is the way.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The joy of cymbals, the loud roar of the Name, the shouts of victory, the bliss of Brahman. Garuda-poles, processions, rows of banners; the joy is endless, even for Brahma and the gods. In joy the Vaishnavas fall flat upon the ground, each one nobler than the last. In that joy even stones break open and weep; wicked, cruel men become pure. Tuka says: going to Vaikuntha is easy; the story of Rama and Krishna is the very road.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram paints the congregational worship, the kirtan, with its cymbals, banners, processions, and the shouted Name, a joy so great even Brahma and the gods share it. He shows the Vaishnavas prostrate in ecstasy and claims its power plainly: in that bliss even stones melt and weep, and hard, cruel men are made pure. The point he lands is that the way to the highest heaven is not difficult or secret. Simply telling and hearing the story of Rama and Krishna is itself the road.

GATHA 2102

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, devotees as warriors over death

मराठी मूळ

भक्तिसुखें जे मातले । ते किळकाळा शूर जाले॥१॥
 हातीं बाण हरिनामाचे । वीर गर्जती विठ्ठलाचे ॥१॥
 महां दोषां आला त्रास । जन्ममरणां केला नाश ॥२॥
 सहस्रनामाची आरोळी । एक एकाहूनि बळी ॥३॥
 नाहीं आणिकांचा गुमान । ज्याचें अंकित त्यावांचून ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे त्यांच्या घरीं । मोक्षसिद्धी या कामारी॥५॥ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who are intoxicated with the joy of devotion have become heroes who have conquered death itself. With arrows of Hari's name in hand, the warriors of Vitthal roar in triumph.

Great sins have been driven out in terror; birth and death have been destroyed. The battle cry of a thousand names rings out, each devotee mightier than the last.

They heed no other power except the One to whom they belong. Says Tuka, in their homes, liberation and all attainments serve as household servants.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those drunk on the joy of devotion have become heroes over death. With arrows of Hari's name in hand, the warriors of Vitthal roar. Great sins fled in terror; birth and death were destroyed. The war-cry of the thousand names goes up, each one mightier than the last. They care for no other power; they are stamped with one alone and no other. Tuka says: in their houses, liberation and all powers wait as serving maids.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram casts the joyful devotees as soldiers and the Name as their weapon. Intoxicated with bhakti, they become heroes who defeat death itself; the thousand names of God are their war-cry, sins flee, and the cycle of birth and death is broken. They answer to no power but the one God whose mark they bear. The claim he lands is the boldest: liberation, the prize ascetics strain for, and all the great attainments are mere household servants in the devotee's home, because love of the Name already holds everything they could grant.

GATHA 2103

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the neglected vow

मराठी मूळ

पंधरां दिवसां एक एकादशी । कां रे न करिसी व्रतसार ॥1॥
 काय तुझा जीव जातो एका दिसें । फराळाच्या मिसें धणी घेसी ॥२॥
 स्वहित कारण मानवेल जन । हरिकथा पूजन वैष्णवांचें ॥3॥
 थोडे तुज घरीं होती उजगरे । देउळासी कां रे मरसी जातां ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे कां रे सकुमार जालासी । काय जाब देसी यमदूतां ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Every fortnight comes one Ekadashi; why do you not observe this sacred vow? Will your life end from fasting one day? Under the guise of eating light, you fill your belly. For your own good, honor the people, attend the story of Hari, and worship the Vaishnavas.

You stay up late at home for trifles; why do you groan at the thought of walking to the temple? Says Tuka, why have you become so delicate? What answer will you give to the messengers of death?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Once a fortnight comes an Ekadashi; why do you not keep the simple vow? Will your life leave you in one day of fasting? Under cover of a light meal you stuff yourself full. For your own good, honor people, attend the story of Hari, worship the Vaishnavas. You stay up late at home over trifles; why do you act as if walking to the temple will kill you? Tuka says: why have you grown so delicate? What answer will you give the messengers of death?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram scolds the lazy excuses that smother simple devotion. The fast of Ekadashi comes only twice a month and harms no one, yet the listener dodges it and gorges on snacks while pretending to fast. He contrasts the energy spent staying up late on trifles with the groaning reluctance to walk to the temple or sit through the story of Hari. The harsh question at the end points at self-examination, not contempt: you indulge yourself now, but when the messengers of death come, what will you have to show them?

GATHA 2104

*The Power of the Name**The Name lifts the lowborn high*

मराठी मूळ

कथा हें भूषण जनामध्ये सार । तरले अपार बहुत येणें ॥1॥
 नीचिये कुळींचा उंचा वंद्य होय । हरीचे जो गाय गुणवाद ॥ध्रु॥
 देव त्याची माथां वंदी पायधुळी । दीप झाला कुळीं वंशाचिये ॥2॥
 त्याची निंदा करी त्याची कुष्ठ वाणी । मुख संवदणी रजकाची ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाही चोरीचा व्यापार । विठ्ठलाचें सार नाम ध्यावें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The sacred story is the finest ornament among people, the essence of all things; countless souls have been saved by it. Even one born in a lowly family becomes honored and revered if he sings the glories of Hari.

God Himself bows to the dust of such a devotee's feet; that soul becomes a lamp in the family lineage. But the tongue that slanders such a one becomes leprous; its mouth is like a washerman's rag.

Says Tuka, there is no hidden dealing here; the name of Vitthal is the true essence. Take it openly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The sacred story is the ornament among people, the essence; countless souls have crossed over by it. One born in a low family becomes high and worthy of honor if he sings the praise of Hari. God himself bows to the dust of his feet; he becomes a lamp to his whole line. The tongue that slanders such a one turns leprous; its mouth is a washerman's rag. Tuka says: there is no hidden dealing here; meditate on the name of Vitthal, the essence.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram declares that singing God's story is the truest distinction among people, and that it overturns the order of birth. A person born low becomes high and honored, even revered, simply by praising Hari, until God himself bows to the dust of his feet and the devotee becomes a lamp for his whole lineage. Against this he sets a warning: the tongue that slanders such a devotee rots like leprosy, foul as a washerman's rag. The closing turn aims it at honesty: there is nothing secret or stolen about this path, so take up the Name of Vitthal openly and dwell on it.

GATHA 2105

*Worldly Metaphors**Counsel, measure your strength first*

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं पाइतन भूपतीशीं दावा । धिग त्या कर्तव्या आगी लागो ॥1॥
 मुंगियांच्या मुखा गजाचा आहार । न साहावे भार जाय जीवें ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे आधीं करावा विचार । शूरपणें तीर मोकलावा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One should not challenge a king without having earned that right; may fire consume such reckless ambition. An ant cannot take the food of an elephant; the weight of it would cost its life.

Says Tuka, first deliberate carefully, and only then release the arrow with true aim.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not pick a fight with a king before you have earned the right. Curse that kind of reckless deed; let fire take it. An ant cannot eat the food of an elephant. The weight of it would cost the ant its life. Tuka says: think first, and only then, with courage, let the arrow fly.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is warning against action that outruns one's strength. He uses two pictures: an ant cannot swallow an elephant's portion, and a small person should not challenge a king without first earning the standing for it; to try is to invite ruin. The point is not cowardice but order: deliberate, weigh what you can actually carry, and then act. When you do act, act with full courage, like an archer who has taken aim before releasing the arrow. Recklessness and timidity are both refused; what he praises is thought before the shot.

GATHA 2106

Devotion to Vitthal

Pandhari, the free bazaar of love

मराठी मूळ

तिन्ही लोक ऋणें बांधिले जयानें । सर्वसिद्ध केणें तये घरीं ॥१॥
 पंढरीचोहोटां घातला दुकान । मांडिले वान आवडीचे ॥२॥
 आषाढी कातिनकी भरिले हाट । इनाम हे पेंठ घेतां देतां ॥३॥
 मुक्ति कोणी तेथें हातीं नेघे फुका । लुटितील सुखा प्रेमाचिया ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The One who has bound all three worlds in His debt, in whose household every fulfillment resides, has opened a shop at the crossroads of Pandhari, displaying wares of every desire. At the great fairs of Ashadhi and Kartiki, the marketplace overflows; it is a free bazaar of giving and receiving.

No one there picks up liberation even for free; instead, they plunder the joy of divine love. Says Tuka, the saints and the virtuous are fortune's own; they have been gathering this treasure across countless births.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He has bound all three worlds in his debt. Every fulfillment lives in his house. At the crossroads of Pandhari he has opened a shop and laid out the wares everyone desires. At the great fairs of Ashadhi and Kartiki the market overflows; here giving and taking are free. No one there reaches for liberation, even when it costs nothing. They plunder the joy of love instead. Tuka says: the saints and the good are fortune's own; across countless births they have been gathering at this market.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures Vitthal's Pandhari as a marketplace where the usual prices are reversed. God owns everything and owes nothing, yet he sets up a free shop and stocks it with whatever any heart could want. At the great pilgrim fairs the stalls overflow, and the goods are given away. The radical claim is in what the crowd does: offered liberation for nothing, no one bothers to pick it up, because they would rather seize the joy of love, which they rate higher than release itself. The saints are the lucky traders who have been coming to this fair lifetime after lifetime.

GATHA 2107

Devotion to Vitthal

Pandhari, the generous king beckons

मराठी मूळ

दुःखाचिये साटीं तेथें मिळे सुख । अनाथाची भूक दैन्य जाय ॥1॥
 उदाराचा राणा पंढरीस आहे । उभारोनि बाहे पालवितो ॥1॥
 जाणतियाहूनि नेणत्याची गोडी । आंळगी आवडी करुनियां ॥2॥
 शीण घेऊनियां प्रेम देतो साटी । न विचारी तुटी लाभा कांहीं ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे असों अनाथ दुबळीं । आह्मांसी तो पाळी पांडुरंग ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Where one brings sorrow, there one finds joy in return. The hunger and wretchedness of the destitute vanish there.

The king of the generous dwells in Pandhari, arms raised high, beckoning all. He loves the innocence of the unknowing even more than the wisdom of the learned; He embraces them with special affection.

He takes on suffering and gives love in exchange, never counting the cost or the gain. Says Tuka, let us be poor and helpless; Panduranga will sustain us all the same.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Bring your sorrow there, and there you receive joy in exchange. The hunger and misery of the helpless are gone. The king of the generous lives in Pandhari, arms raised high, waving everyone in. He loves the simple one who does not know more than the one who knows. He embraces them out of pure fondness. He takes your weariness and gives love in its place; he never counts the loss or the gain. Tuka says: let us be poor and helpless. Panduranga will look after us all the same.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the relation with God into a trade where the destitute come out ahead. You bring sorrow and weariness; what you carry away is joy and love. The generous king of Pandhari does not stand aloof but stands with his arms up, beckoning, and he favors the unknowing over the learned, embracing them out of plain affection. He keeps no ledger of profit and loss in this exchange. So Tukaram is glad to claim poverty and helplessness as his own condition: it is exactly the helpless that Panduranga sustains.

GATHA 2108

Devotion to Vitthal

Single love, only your name

मराठी मूळ

आणिक मात माझ्या नावडे जीवासी । काय करुं यासी पांडुरंगा ॥१॥
 मुखा तें चि गोड श्रवणां आवडी । चित्त माझें ओढी तुझे पायीं ॥२॥
 जये पदीं नाहीं विठ्ठलाचें नाम । मज होती श्रम आइकतां ॥३॥
 आणिकाचें मज ह्यणवितां लाज । वाटे हें सहज न बोलावें ॥४॥
 तुका ह्यणे मज तूं च आवडसी । सर्वभावेंविशीं पांडुरंगा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

No other word pleases my jiva, O Panduranga. Only this is sweet to my lips, only this do my ears delight in; my chitta is drawn only to Your feet.

Any verse that does not contain Vitthal's name wearies me to hear. I feel ashamed to be called a devotee of anyone else; it does not feel natural to even speak of it.

Says Tuka, You alone delight me in every way, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

No other word pleases my jiva, O Panduranga. What am I to do about this? Only this is sweet on my lips; only this my ears want to hear; my chitta is pulled toward your feet. Any verse without Vitthal's name wearies me to hear. I feel ashamed to be called anyone else's; it does not feel natural even to say it. Tuka says: you alone delight me, in every way, O Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a love that has narrowed to one object until everything else falls away. His mouth, his ears, and his mind all want the same thing: Vitthal's name and Vitthal's feet, and no other speech tastes good to him. The claim sharpens into exclusion: a verse without that name tires him, and being named as anyone else's devotee feels shameful and unnatural. He is not boasting of discipline but confessing a pull he cannot help. In every way, the one delight is Panduranga and no other.

GATHA 2109

Devotion to Vitthal

Singing freely, God is simple

मराठी मूळ

कळेल हें तैसें गाईन मी तुज । जनासवें काज काय माझें ॥1॥
 करीन मी स्तुती आपुले आवडी । जैसी माझ्या गोडी वाटे जीवा ॥धु.॥
 होऊनी निर्भर नाचेन मी छंदें । आपुल्या आनंदें करुनियां ॥2॥
 काय करूं कळा युक्ती या कुसरी । जाणिवेच्या परी सकळिका ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझें जयासवें काज । भोळा तो सहज पांडुरंग ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I will sing of You as best I can; what business do I have with the opinion of the world? I will offer praise according to my own love, as sweetness fills my jiva. I will become carefree and dance to my own rhythm, rejoicing in my own bliss.

What use are cleverness, strategy, or skill? All such knowing has its limits. Says Tuka, my dealings are with the One who is simple and straightforward: Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will sing of you as well as I can. What business do I have with what people think? I will praise you the way my own love wants, however the sweetness rises in my jiva. I will let go of all care and dance to my own rhythm, glad in my own joy. What use are cleverness, tricks, and skill? All such knowing has its limits. Tuka says: the one I deal with is simple and plain, Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram defends a worship that owes nothing to performance or to the audience. He will sing as best he can, by his own love and his own joy, and the world's opinion is none of his concern. He throws away cleverness, strategy, and technical skill, because all knowing runs into a wall, while love does not. The reason he can be this artless is the nature of the one he serves: Panduranga is bhola, simple and straightforward, so plain devotion is the right coin and clever display is wasted on him.

GATHA 2110

The Nature of God

God loves the simple-hearted

मराठी मूळ

तयासी नेणतीं बहु आवडती । होय जयां चितीं एक भाव ॥1॥
 उपमन्यु धुरु हें काय जाणती । प्रल्हादाच्या चितीं नारायण ॥ध्रु॥
 कोळें भिल्लें पशु श्वापदें अपारें । कृपेच्या सागरें तारियेलीं ॥2॥
 काय तें गोपाळें चांगलीं शाहाणीं । तयां चक्रपाणी जेवी सवें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे भोळा भाविक हा देव । आह्मी त्याचे पाव धरुनी ठेलों ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He greatly loves the innocent; single-pointed devotion delights Him most. What did Upamanya or Dhruva really know? Narayana dwelt in Prahlada's simple heart.

Tribals, hunters, animals, and creatures beyond count have been saved by that ocean of mercy. Were the cowherds wise or learned? Yet Krishna ate with them as an equal.

Says Tuka, this God is innocent and devoted; we have grasped His feet and will not let go.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He loves the unknowing very much; one whose heart holds a single faith delights him. What did Upamanya or Dhruva really know? Yet Narayana lived in Prahlada's simple heart. Tribals, hunters, animals, and countless wild creatures were carried across by that ocean of mercy. Were the cowherds clever or learned? Yet Krishna ate beside them as one of them. Tuka says: this God is simple and full of faith. We have taken hold of his feet and will not let go.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers the assumption that God is won by knowledge by listing those he actually saved. Child devotees, forest hunters, and animals beyond counting were ferried across by mercy alone; the cowherds were neither scholars nor sages, yet Krishna sat and ate among them as an equal. What these have in common is not learning but single, simple faith, the one thing that delights Narayana most. The radical point is that God himself is bhola, drawn to the unsophisticated heart. So Tukaram stakes everything on that: he grips the feet and refuses to be pried loose.

GATHA 2111

*The Power of the Name**The Name, no grammar required*

मराठी मूळ

न लगे पाहावें अबद्ध वांकडें । उच्चारारवें कोडें नाम तुझें ॥1॥
 नाहीं वेळ नाहीं पंडितांचा धाक । होत कां वाचक वेदवक्ते ॥ध्रु॥
 पुराणीं ही कोठें न मिळे पाहातां । तैशीं या अनंता ठेवूं नामें ॥2॥
 आपुलिया मना उपजे आनंद । तैसे करूं छंद कथेकाळीं ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी आनंदें चि धालों । आनंद चि ल्यालों अळंकार ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is no need to worry about grammar or correctness; just utter Your name with delight. There is no fixed time, no fear of the pandits.

Need one be a scholar or a master of the Vedas? Even in the Puranas, one cannot find all that is there to find; so let us give You whatever names our minds desire, O Infinite One. Let the mind give rise to its own joy; let us make our own music at the time of the sacred story.

Says Tuka, we are filled with bliss alone; we wear bliss itself as our ornament.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is no need to fret over wrong grammar or a crooked phrase. Just say your name with delight. There is no set time, and no need to fear the pandits. Must one be a reciter, a master of the Vedas? Even searching the Puranas, you cannot find all there is to find; so let us give you, O Infinite One, whatever names our minds choose. Let joy rise in our own minds; let us make our own music while we tell your story. Tuka says: we are filled with bliss alone; we wear bliss itself as our ornament.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram clears away every gatekeeper that stands between an ordinary person and the Name. Correct grammar, the prescribed hour, the approval of scholars, mastery of the Vedas: none of it is required to call on God. Since not even the Puranas exhaust who the Infinite is, no fixed vocabulary can fence him in, so any name the heart offers is allowed. What matters is the joy that rises and the song the devotee makes in telling God's story. The closing image makes the whole claim: bliss is not a reward earned by qualification but the very ornament the singer already wears.

GATHA 2112

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, God stored within

मराठी मूळ

दैन्य दुःख आह्मां न येती जवळी । दहन हे होळी होती दोष ॥1॥
 सर्व सुखें येती मानें लोटांगणीं । कोण यांसी आणी दृष्टीपुढें ॥ध्रु॥
 आमुची आवडी संतसमागम । आणीक त्या नाम विठोबाचें ॥2॥
 आमचें मागणें मागों त्याची सेवा । मोक्षाची निद।वा कोणा चाड ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे पोटीं सांटविला देव । नुन्य तो भाव कोण आह्मां ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Poverty and sorrow cannot come near us; our sins are burned in a bonfire. All joys come bowing before us; who brings these things before our eyes? Our delight is the company of the saints and, beyond that, the name of Vithoba.

Our only request is to serve Him; who cares for the stale fare of liberation? Says Tuka, we have stored God within our chitta; what devotion could we possibly lack?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Poverty and sorrow cannot come near us; our faults are burned up in a bonfire. All joys come bowing low before us. Who can even hold these things up in front of our eyes? Our delight is the company of the saints, and beyond that, the name of Vithoba. All we ask is to serve him; who wants the stale leftover of liberation? Tuka says: we have stored God inside the chitta. What devotion could we still be lacking?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the security of one who already holds the highest good. With God kept within the heart, poverty and grief cannot approach, and faults are burned away as in a fire; ordinary pleasures are so far beneath him that they bow rather than tempt. His two joys are the company of the saints and the name of Vithoba, and his single request is simply to serve. The sharp line is his dismissal of liberation as stale leftover fare: release is no prize to one who has the living God within and wants nothing more than to keep loving him.

GATHA 2113

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false holy man

मराठी मूळ

काळतोंडा सुना । भलतें चोरुनि करी जना ॥1॥
 धिग त्याचें साधुपण । विटाळुनि वर्ते मन ॥ध्रु॥
 मंत्र ऐसे घोकी । वश व्हावें जेणें लोकीं ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे थीत । नागवला नव्हे हित ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The dark-faced wretch secretly does whatever mischief he pleases. Cursed be his saintliness; his mind acts from corruption.

He memorizes mantras only to gain power over people. Says Tuka, such a one has been stripped bare, and there is no good in him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The dark-faced wretch does whatever he likes in secret, behind people's backs. Curse his holiness; his mind moves in defilement. He drones his mantras only so he can gain power over people. Tuka says: in truth such a one has been stripped bare. There is no good left in him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram exposes a piety that is a front for control. The man keeps a saintly surface in public while doing as he pleases in secret, so the holiness is a curse rather than a virtue; his inner mind is defiled even as his outer act is clean. The giveaway is the motive behind his recited mantras: he uses them to bind and dominate others, not to seek God. The warning points at the pattern, not at one named man: religious technique aimed at power over people leaves a person inwardly empty, robbed of the very good it pretends to.

GATHA 2114

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, refusing the scorners

मराठी मूळ

विठ्ठल मुक्तिदाता । नव्हे मरो हें बोलता ॥1॥
 मज न साहावें कानीं । विष उत्तर लागे मनीं ॥ध्रु॥
 हरीकथेतें धीकारी । शत्रु माझा तो वैरी ॥2॥
 सुना काळतोंडा । जो या देवा ह्मणे धोंडा ॥3॥
 अहं ह्मणे ब्रह्म । नेणे भक्तीचें तें वर्म ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे क्षण । नको तयाचें दर्षण ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Vitthal is the giver of liberation. Whoever denies this, let that speaker perish.

I cannot bear to hear such poisonous words; they wound my mind. One who scorns the story of Hari is my enemy and foe.

Dark-mouthed and wretched is the one who calls this God a mere stone. The one who says I am Brahman, yet does not know the secret of devotion.

Says Tuka, I do not wish even a moment's sight of such a person.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Vitthal is the giver of liberation. Whoever says otherwise, let that speaker perish. I cannot bear such words in my ears; the poison of them sticks in my mind. One who scorns the story of Hari is my enemy and my foe. Dark-mouthed and wretched is the one who calls this God a mere stone. So too the one who says I am Brahman yet does not know the secret of devotion. Tuka says: not even for a moment do I want the sight of such a person.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram draws a hard line around what he will and will not tolerate near him. For him Vitthal is the giver of release, and to deny it, to mock the telling of Hari's story, or to dismiss the temple image as just a stone is a poison he cannot stand to hear. He names a particular target: the one who proclaims I am Brahman while remaining blind to the secret of bhakti, mistaking a slogan of identity for the real thing. The harshness is aimed at the contempt itself, the stance that scorns devotion. From such company Tukaram wants distance, not even a moment's sight of it.

GATHA 2115

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the easy path to ruin

मराठी मूळ

यमपुरी त्यांनीं वसविली जाणा । उच्छेद भजना विधी केला ॥१॥
 अवघड कोणी न करी सांगतां । सुलभ बहुतां गोड वाटे ॥२॥
 काय ते नेणते होते मार्गे ऋषी । आधार लोकांसी ग्रंथ केले ॥३॥
 द्रव्य दारा कोणें स्थापियेलें धन । पिंडाचें पाळण विषयभोग ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे दोहीं ठायीं हा फजित । पावे यमदूतजना हातीं ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Know this: those who have destroyed the practice of worship have populated the realm of Yama. No one does what is difficult when told; the easy path seems sweet to many.

Were the ancient sages ignorant? They made the scriptures as a support for the people. Who established the pursuit of wealth and pleasures, the feeding of the body with sense-enjoyments? Says Tuka, such a person is disgraced in both worlds and falls into the hands of Yama's servants.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Know this: those who tore down the practice of worship have peopled the city of Yama. No one does the hard thing when told to; the easy way tastes sweet to the many. Were the sages of old ignorant? They made the scriptures as a support for people. Who set up the chase after wealth and women, the feeding of the body with sense-pleasures? Tuka says: such a person is disgraced in both worlds and falls into the hands of Yama's messengers.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram attacks those who pull down devotion in favor of an easy, self-serving life. Abandoning worship is not freedom but the road that fills Yama's city, since the soft path always tastes sweeter and the crowd takes it. He appeals to the ancient sages, who were not fools: they left the scriptures precisely as a support for ordinary people. Against that, the life built only on money, lust, and feeding the senses has no real founder and no real ground. The point is put as a pattern to examine in oneself: choose the sweet, undisciplined road and you are shamed here and seized hereafter.

GATHA 2116

The Moral Ideal

Moral counsel, knowing transgression

मराठी मूळ

न कळतां कोणीं मोडियेलें व्रत । तया प्रायश्चित्त चाले कांहीं ॥१॥
जाणतियां वज्रलेप जाले थोर । तयांस अघोर कुंभपाक ॥२॥
आतां जरी कोणी नाइके सांगतां । तया शिकवितां तें चि पाप ॥३॥
काय करूं मज देवें बोलविलें । माझें खोळंबिलें काय होतें ॥४॥
तुका ह्मणे जना पाहा विचारुनी । सुख वाटे मनीं तें चि करा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If someone breaks a vow unknowingly, some form of expiation is still possible. But for those who transgress knowingly, the sin is sealed like an iron brand; the severest hells await them.

If someone will not listen even when told, then teaching them only adds to the sin. What can I do? God has moved me to speak; nothing of mine was at stake.

Says Tuka, O people, consider carefully; do whatever brings peace to your mind.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If someone breaks a vow without knowing, some expiation can still be made. But for those who break it knowingly, the fault is sealed like an iron coating, and the worst hells, the boiling cauldron, wait for them. And if a person will not listen when told, then to keep instructing them only adds to the sin. What can I do? God set me to speak. Nothing of mine was at stake. Tuka says: O people, look at this carefully, and do only what brings true peace to your mind.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram weighs the difference between breaking a sacred duty by ignorance and breaking it with open eyes. The first can be repaired; the second hardens like an iron seal and draws the severest hells. He adds a sober note about teaching: once a person refuses to hear, going on instructing them only multiplies the wrong, so the speaker must know when to stop. He clears himself of any private motive, saying God moved him to speak and he gains nothing from it. The closing is an appeal to honest self-examination: weigh it for yourself, and do what genuinely settles the mind rather than what merely flatters it.

GATHA 2117

*The Power of the Name**Social criticism, the nameless life*

मराठी मूळ

वाचे विठ्ठल नाहीं । तो चि प्रेतरूप पाहीं ॥1॥
 धिग त्याचें ज्यालेपण । भार न साहे मेदिन ॥धु.॥
 न बैसे कीर्तनीं । गुण नाइके जो कानीं ॥2॥
 जातां कांटाळे देउळा । तो चि सुना मुखकाळा ॥3॥
 हरिभक्तीविण । त्याचें जळो शाहाणपण ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे तेणें । वंशा आणियेलें उणें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who does not have Vitthal's name on the tongue is a walking corpse. Cursed be such a life; the very earth cannot bear its weight.

One who will not sit in the kirtan, who will not hear God's praise with the ears. One who feels aversion at the sight of the temple is dark-faced and wretched.

Without devotion to Hari, let all his cleverness burn. Says Tuka, such a person has brought disgrace upon the entire lineage.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One who does not have Vitthal on the tongue is a walking corpse; look, that is what he is. Cursed be such a life. The very earth cannot bear its weight. He will not sit in the kirtan. He will not hear God's praise with his ears. He feels disgust at the sight of the temple; that one is empty, his face is black with shame. Without devotion to Hari, let his cleverness burn. Tuka says: such a person has brought disgrace upon his whole line.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures a life by one thing only: whether the Name lives on the tongue. A person who never speaks Vitthal, never sits in the kirtan, never bears to hear God praised, and turns away from the temple, he calls a corpse already, a weight the earth should not have to carry. The harshness is aimed at the pattern, not at insulting a man; he is naming what a life empties to when it has no devotion in it. Such cleverness, he says, deserves to be burned, because it serves nothing. The closing line widens the loss: a life lived without the Name does not disgrace the man alone but the whole line he came from.

GATHA 2118

*The Power of the Name**The Name, why God takes form*

मराठी मूळ

तारिलीं बहुतें चुकवूनि घात । नाम हें अमृत स्वीकारितां ॥१॥
 नेणतां सायास शुद्ध आचरण । यातीकुळहीन नामासाठीं ॥२॥
 जन्म नांव धरी भक्तीच्या पाळणा । आकार कारणा या च साटीं ॥३॥
 असुरीं दाटली पाप होतां फार । मग फेडी भार पृथिवीचा ॥४॥
 तुका ह्याने देव भक्तपण सार । कवतुक- वेव्हार तयासाठीं ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The name has saved many, steering them away from ruin. Without any deliberate effort, without purity of conduct, regardless of caste or lineage, the name alone is the cause.

God takes birth in the cradle of devotion; He assumes form solely for this purpose. When sins grow heavy and demons oppress the earth, He comes to relieve the world of its burden.

Says Tuka, God holds devotion as the highest truth; all His play and dealings exist for its sake.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The Name has saved many, steering them clear of ruin, when they took it in like nectar. No hard effort, no spotless conduct, no high caste or lineage: the Name alone does it. God takes birth in the cradle of devotion; He puts on a form only for this. When sin grows heavy and demons crowd the earth, He comes and lifts its burden away. Tuka says: God holds devotion as the one essential thing; all His play and dealing are for the sake of that.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the Name above every qualification a person might bring. It saves without effort, without ritual purity, without rank or birth; the Name itself is the whole cause. Then he answers the deeper question of why God bothers to take a human form at all: He is born in the cradle of devotion, and form is something He puts on only for the devotee's sake. When the earth groans under sin, that same coming lifts the load. The claim landed is large: even God's descents and dealings exist for devotion, which makes the lowest devotee, with nothing but the Name, the very reason God acts.

GATHA 2119

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the burden laid on God

मराठी मूळ

याचिया आधारें राहिलों निश्चिंत । ठेवूनियां चित्त पायीं सुखें ॥1॥
 माझें सुखदुःख जाणे हित फार । घातलासे भार पांडुरंगा ॥ध्रु॥
 कृपेचीं पोसणीं ठायींचीं अंखिलीं । ह्मणऊनि लागली यास चिंता ॥2॥
 मन राखे हातीं घेऊनियां काठी । इंद्रियें तापटीं फांकों नेदी ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे यासी अवघड नाही । शरणागता कांहीं रक्षावया ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Relying on Him, I remain at peace, my mind happily placed at His feet. He knows my joys and sorrows and cares deeply for my good; I have placed my burden on Panduranga.

He has nourished me with compassion from the very beginning, and so this concern for me is His own. He holds my mind in check with a staff in hand, not allowing the restless senses to stray.

Says Tuka, nothing is difficult for Him when it comes to protecting those who have surrendered.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Resting on Him, I stay free of worry, my mind set happily at His feet. He knows my joy and my sorrow, and cares greatly for my good. I have laid my whole burden on Panduranga. I am one He has fed with His grace from the start, His own to keep; so the worrying over me is His, not mine. He holds my mind in check with a staff in His hand, and will not let the hot, restless senses scatter. Tuka says: nothing is hard for Him when it comes to guarding the one who has surrendered.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is surrender stated as a transfer of responsibility. Because Tukaram has placed his whole burden on Panduranga, the anxiety that would normally be his becomes God's; the one who is fed by grace from the beginning is God's charge to keep. He pictures God as a herdsman with a staff, keeping the restless senses from straying and holding the mind in place, work the devotee no longer has to do himself. The point is not passivity but trust: the protecting is God's task. The closing line carries the weight of the poem: guarding one who has truly surrendered is, for God, nothing difficult at all.

GATHA 2120

The Power of the Name

The Name, instant cure

मराठी मूळ

उभाउभी फळ । अंगीं मंत्राचे या बळ ॥१॥
 ह्यणा विठ्ठल विठ्ठल । गोड आणि स्वल्प बोल ॥२॥
 किळकाळाची बाधा । नव्हे उच्चारितां सदा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्यणे रोग । वारे भवाऐसा भोग ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Instant is the fruit, such is the power of this mantra. Say Vitthal, Vitthal; the words are sweet and simple.

The affliction of death and time cannot touch one who utters them always. Says Tuka, the disease of worldly existence itself is cured by this name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The fruit comes at once; such is the power in this mantra. Say Vitthal, Vitthal: the words are sweet, and only a few. The harm of death and time cannot touch you while you keep saying them. Tuka says: this is the disease whose cure heals the whole sickness of worldly life.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses the Name as a remedy that asks almost nothing and gives at once. Two sweet, simple words, Vitthal, Vitthal, hold the force of a mantra, and the fruit is immediate rather than delayed to some later life. While the Name is on the lips, death and time, the powers that wear everything down, lose their grip. The claim he lands is the largest one: the very disease of worldly existence, the round of birth and suffering, is what this Name cures. So the smallest practice answers the biggest sickness.

GATHA 2121

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, no need to boast

मराठी मूळ

जैसा अधिकार । तैसें बोलावें उत्तर ॥१॥
 काय वाउगी घसघस । आह्मी विठोबाचे दास ॥२॥
 आह्मी जाणों एका देवा । जैसी तैसी करूं सेवा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्यणे भावें । माझें पुढें पडेल ठावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One should speak according to one's capacity and standing. Why the pointless bluster? We are servants of Vithoba.

We know only one God and serve Him however we can. Says Tuka, the truth of my devotion will become clear in what lies ahead.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Speak your answer according to your standing, no more than that. Why all this pointless noise? We are servants of Vithoba. We know one God, and we serve Him as best we can, just as we are. Tuka says: through love, what is mine will show itself plainly in time.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers people who measure worth by clever talk and loud claims. He says a person should speak to the size of his actual standing and drop the empty bluster. His own standing he names simply: a servant of Vithoba who knows one God and serves Him however he is able. There is no boast in it and no apology either. The last line carries the trust underneath: he does not need to argue his case, because devotion proves itself, and what is truly his will become clear in what comes.

GATHA 2122

Autobiography

Autobiography, harassed for nothing

मराठी मूळ

नव जातां घरा । आह्मी कोणाच्या दातारा ॥१॥
कां हे छळूं येती लोक । दाट बळें चि कंटक ॥२॥
नाहीं आह्मी खात । कांहीं कोणाचें लागत ॥३॥
कळे तैसी सेवा । तुका ह्मणे करुं देवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We do not go to anyone's door, O Generous Lord. Then why do these thorny people come to harass us? We do not eat or touch anything that belongs to anyone.

Says Tuka, we serve God as best we understand.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We go to no one's door, O Generous Lord. So why do these people come to torment us, thorns pressing in with all their force? We eat nothing of anyone's; we take nothing that is theirs. Tuka says: we serve God as well as we know how.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays a complaint directly before God and states the injustice plainly. He keeps to himself, begging at no one's door and living off no one's food or goods, yet people crowd in like thorns to harass him. The poem names the puzzle without softening it: he has given them no cause. His only doing is to serve God as best he understands. By saying this to the Generous Lord rather than striking back at his tormentors, he turns persecution into a matter laid before God, trusting that the one who sees his harmlessness is the one to answer it.

GATHA 2123

Autobiography

Autobiography, fault-finding pandits

मराठी मूळ

मोहरोनी चित्ता । आणूं हळूं चि वरि हिता ॥१॥
 तों हे पडती आघात । खोडी काढिती पंडित ॥२॥
 संवसारा भेणें । कांहीं उसंती तों पेणें ॥३॥
 एखादिया भावें । तुका ह्मणे जवळी यावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Slowly winning the mind's trust, I try to draw it toward what is good. But then obstacles arise; the pandits find fault and attack.

Afraid of worldly life, I seek even a brief refuge and shelter. Says Tuka, by some means or another, one must come near to God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Turning the mind toward me, I try slowly to draw it up toward what is good. But then the blows fall; the pandits hunt out faults and attack. Afraid of worldly life, I look for even a little rest, a place to halt. Tuka says: by some feeling or other, one must come close to God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the patient inner work of devotion and the opposition it meets from the learned. Gently, a little at a time, he tries to coax the mind toward its own good, but the pandits seize on every fault and strike at the effort. He is not fighting them; he is afraid of worldly life and only wants a small place to rest, a shelter on the road. The poem ends with the simple counsel that survives all the fault-finding: by whatever feeling a person can manage, the one thing needful is to come near to God. Scholarship can attack the method; it cannot replace the nearness.

GATHA 2124

Confession and Sin

Confession, the unlearned devotee

मराठी मूळ

काय जाणों वेद । आह्मी आगमाचे भेद ॥१॥
 एक रूप तुझें मनीं । धरुनि राहिलों चिंतनी ॥२॥
 कोठें अधिकार । नाहीं रानट विचार ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे दीना । नुपेक्षावें नारायणा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What do I know of the Vedas? I am ignorant of scriptural subtleties. I simply hold Your one form in my mind and remain absorbed in contemplation.

I have no authority or standing; I am a simple rustic with no sophistication. Says Tuka, O Narayana, do not neglect the poor.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What do I know of the Vedas? I do not know the secrets of the scriptures. I have held one form of Yours in my mind and stayed there, dwelling on it. I have no authority, no standing; my thinking is rough and untaught. Tuka says: O Narayana, do not overlook this poor one.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram offers his lack of learning openly rather than hiding it. He cannot read the Vedas or untie the knots of scripture, and he does not pretend otherwise. In place of all that, he has one thing: a single form of God held steadily in the mind. He admits he has no authorized standing and calls his own understanding rustic and rough. The plea he lands on turns weakness into a claim: precisely because he is poor and unlettered, with nothing but love for one form, he asks Narayana not to pass him by. The Name and the held image are offered as enough where learning is absent.

GATHA 2125

Autobiography

Autobiography, the calling to fight

मराठी मूळ

धर्माचे पाळण । करणें पाषांड खंडण ॥१॥
 हें चि आह्मां करणें काम । बीज वाढवावें नाम ॥२॥
 तीक्ष्ण उत्तरें । हातीं घेउनि बाण फिरें ॥३॥
 नाहीं भीड भार । तुका ह्मणे साना थोर ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

To protect dharma and to destroy hypocrisy: this is our appointed task. The work given to us is to nurture and spread the name.

Sharp words are the arrows we take in hand. Says Tuka, we show no deference to rank, whether small or great.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To guard dharma and to break down hypocrisy: this is our work. This is the task given to us, to make the seed of the Name grow. Sharp words are the arrows; I take them in hand and go about. Tuka says: I show no deference, fear no one's weight, small or great.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram states his calling as a kind of warfare with words. The double charge is plain: protect true religion and tear down false show, and spread the Name like a seed made to grow. His weapons are not violence but sharp speech, arrows he carries openly into the fight. He refuses the usual restraint that lets rank or reputation buy

silence; he will not flatter the great or spare the powerful when they are hollow. The harshness is pointed at hypocrisy itself, not at persons for their own sake, and the whole aim of the fighting is the same single thing: to let the Name take root and grow.

GATHA 2126

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, no harvest without care

मराठी मूळ

निवडावें खडे । तरी दळण वोजें घडे ॥१॥
 नाहीं तरि नासोनि जाय । कारण आळस उरे हाय ॥२॥
 निवडावें तन। सेतीं करावें राखण ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नीत । न विचारितां नव्हे हित ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If you remove the pebbles, the grinding will proceed properly. Otherwise, everything is spoiled; laziness is the cause, and regret is all that remains.

You must weed the field and guard the crop. Says Tuka, without careful thought, no true good can come.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Pick out the pebbles, and the grinding goes well. Leave them, and everything is spoiled; laziness is the cause, and only regret is left. Weed the field; stand guard over the crop. Tuka says: without careful thought, no real good comes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram teaches the inner life through plain farm-work images, and leaves the reader to carry them across. Stones must be picked from the grain or the milling is ruined; weeds must be pulled and the field watched or the harvest is lost. In each case the spoiling traces back to one fault, laziness, and what it leaves behind is regret. The closing line names the lesson the metaphors point to: nothing truly good arrives without careful, deliberate attention. The work of clearing and guarding the mind is as unglamorous, and as necessary, as tending a field.

GATHA 2127

Social Criticism

Social criticism, confronting the wicked

मराठी मूळ

दुर्जनाचा मान । सुखें करावा खंडण ॥१॥
 लात हाणोनियां वारी । गुंड वाट शुद्ध करी ॥२॥
 बहुतां पीडी खळ । त्याचा धरावा विटाळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नखें । काढुनि टाकिजेती सुखें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The honor of the wicked should be gladly dismantled. Kick the ruffian aside and clear the road.

When a villain oppresses many, hold him as one to be shunned. Says Tuka, such nails should be clipped and cast away with pleasure.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The honor of the wicked should be gladly torn down. Kick the ruffian out of the way and clear the road clean. When a villain torments many, treat him as a thing to be shunned. Tuka says: such nails should be clipped and thrown away, and gladly.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks bluntly against the standing that bullies and wrongdoers enjoy. Where a villain oppresses many, he says their borrowed honor should be stripped without hesitation and the road they block cleared. The hard images, kicking aside the ruffian, clipping off the nail, are aimed at the harm such a person does to the many, not at relishing cruelty for its own sake. He treats unchecked wickedness as a thing to be set apart and removed, the way you cut away a nail that scratches. The poem is a refusal to let politeness shield those who prey on others, and the energy is for protecting the many they hurt.

GATHA 2128

Autobiography

Autobiography, hard words for the common good

मराठी मूळ

नका धरुं कोणी । राग वचनाचा मनीं ॥१॥
 येथें बहुतांचें हित । शुद्ध करोनि राखा चित्त ॥२॥
 नाहीं केली निंदा । आह्मीं दुसिलेंसे भेदा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज । येणें विण काय काज ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let no one hold anger in the chitta at these words. The good of many is at stake here; keep your mind pure and clear.

I have not slandered anyone; I have only pierced the veil of false distinctions. Says Tuka, without doing this, what purpose does anything serve?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let no one hold anger in the heart at these words. The good of many rests here; keep your mind clean and clear. I have not slandered anyone. I have only torn the veil off false distinctions. Tuka says: without doing this, what use is anything I do?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers those stung by his sharp speech by naming his intent. He asks them not to take the words as personal injury, because what is at stake is the good of many, not his own grievance. He draws the line carefully: he has not slandered any person; he has only exposed the false distinctions that divide people. The harshness, he

says, is pointed at the lie, not at the human being holding it. The closing line states the stakes of his whole work: if he kept silent and let the false stand, nothing else he does would have any purpose at all.

GATHA 2129

Prayers

Prayer, the child's cry to God

मराठी मूळ

कांहीं जडभारी । पडतां ते अवश्वरी ॥१॥
तुज आठवावे पाय । आह्मीं मोकलूनि धाय ॥ध्रु॥
तान पीडी भूक । शीत उष्ण वाटे दुःख ॥२॥
तुका ह्मणे लाड । तेथें पुरे माझें कोड ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When something heavy and burdensome falls upon this perishable body, we cry out to Your feet, O God, weeping aloud. Hunger and thirst torment us; heat and cold feel like suffering.

Says Tuka, let my childish longing find its fulfillment at Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When something heavy and hard falls on this perishable body, we cry out to your feet and weep aloud. Thirst torments us, hunger torments us; heat and cold feel like pain. Tuka says: let my childish longing be fulfilled there, at your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram comes to God the way a small child comes to a parent, with nothing to offer but its weeping. When the weight of the body, sickness, hunger, thirst, heat, cold presses on him, he does not pretend to be strong; he cries out and asks to be held. The whole prayer rests in calling his need childish, lada, a child's clamor that only love can quiet. He asks for no grand boon, only that this clinging find its rest at God's feet.

GATHA 2130

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the burden handed over

मराठी मूळ

होउनि कृपाळ । भार घेतला सकळ ॥१॥
तूं चि चालविसी माझें । भार सकळ ही ओझें ॥ध्रु॥
देह तुझ्या पायीं । ठेवुनि झालों उतराई ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In Your mercy, You have taken the entire burden upon Yourself. You alone carry my load, all of it, every last weight.

I have placed this body at Your feet and become free of all obligation.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In your mercy you have taken the whole burden upon yourself. You alone carry what is mine; the whole load, every weight, is yours. I have laid this body at your feet, and now my debt is paid.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes surrender as a debt cleared rather than a feeling worked up. Once God in mercy takes the burden, there is nothing left for the devotee to carry; the load that wore him down is now wholly God's. Laying the body itself at God's feet is the act that settles the account, so he is utramai, free of all obligation. The poem says plainly that the work of living is no longer his to manage; it has changed hands.

GATHA 2131

Prayers

Prayer, hold my wandering mind

मराठी मूळ

आतां होई माझे बुद्धीचा जनिता । अवरावें चित्ता पांडुरंगा ॥१॥
 येथूनियां कोठें न वजें बाहेरी । ऐसें मज धरीं सत्ताबळें ॥२॥
 अनावर गुण बहुतां जातींचे । न बोलावें वाचे ऐसें करीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हित कोणिये जातीचें । तुज ठावें साचें मायबापा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now become the guide of my intellect; restrain my mind, O Panduranga. Do not let me go anywhere beyond this place; hold me here by the force of Your authority.

The wayward tendencies of many natures run wild in me; make it so that my tongue cannot speak what it should not. Says Tuka, You alone know, O Father and Mother, the true good of each nature.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now become the maker of my understanding; rein in my mind, Panduranga. Do not let me wander anywhere beyond this place; hold me here by the force of your authority. Wild tendencies of many kinds run loose in me; make it so my tongue cannot say what it should not say. Tuka says: you alone truly know, mother and father, what is good for each kind of nature.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram admits he cannot govern his own mind and asks God to take that office by force. He does not request gentle help; he asks to be held in place by God's sattabal, sheer authority, because left to himself he drifts. The wayward pulls of his nature show even in speech, so he prays that his tongue be stopped before it harms. He ends by handing over even the judgment of what is good for him, trusting the parent who knows each creature's true welfare better than the creature does.

GATHA 2132

Prayers

Confession, swallowing the bait again

मराठी मूळ

नित्य मनासी करितों विचार । तों हें अनावर विषयलोभी ॥१॥
 आतां मज राखें आपुलिया बळें । न देखें हे जाळें उगवतां ॥२॥
 सांपडलों गळीं नाहीं त्याची सत्ता । उगळी मागुता घेतला तो ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मी तों अज्ञान चि आहे । परि तुझी पाहें वास देवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Every day I counsel my own mind, but it remains unruly, hungry for sense pleasures. Now protect me by Your own strength; I cannot see these traps as they appear.

I was caught on the hook, but having no power of my own, I swallowed the bait again. Says Tuka, I am truly ignorant, but I look to You, O God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Every day I reason with my mind, and still it stays unruly, greedy for sense pleasures. Now guard me by your own strength; I cannot see this net even as it closes. I was caught on the hook, and having no power of my own, I swallowed the bait again. Tuka says: I am truly ignorant, but I keep looking your way, O God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram confesses that daily self-talk has not tamed his appetites, and he names the failure honestly. The image is brutal: a fish hooked once, freed, and then gulping the same bait down again, because it has no strength to do otherwise. He cannot even see the net as it tightens, so self-help is useless; only God's strength can guard him. What is left is not mastery but direction: ignorant and weak, he simply keeps facing toward God, and calls that his only hope.

GATHA 2133

Prayers

Prayer, wealth the weak cannot keep

मराठी मूळ

दुर्बळाचे हातीं सांपडलें धन । करितां जतन नये त्यासी ॥१॥
 तैसी परी मज झाली नारायणा । योगक्षेम जाणां तुझी आतां ॥२॥
 खातां लेतां नये मिरवितां वरि । राजा दंड करी जनराग ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मग तळमळ उरे । देखिलें तें झुरे पाहावया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When wealth falls into the hands of the weak, they cannot keep it safe. Such is my predicament, O Narayana; now You must manage my welfare.

I cannot properly use or display or enjoy it; the king punishes and the people resent me. Says Tuka, then only restless longing remains; what was once seen, the eyes yearn to see again.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When wealth falls into a weak man's hands, he cannot keep it safe. That is exactly my state, Narayana; my welfare is yours to manage now. I cannot use it, wear it, or show it off; the king fines me and people resent me. Tuka says: then only the burning remains, and the eyes ache to see again what they once saw.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram likens spiritual gifts to riches placed in the hands of someone too weak to hold them. A poor man who suddenly gets wealth he cannot protect is exposed on every side: he cannot enjoy it, the powerful prey on him, the crowd envies him. So Tukaram refuses to manage his own welfare and asks Narayana to take charge of his yogakshema, his keeping and his gain. The closing line names the real danger of half held grace: it leaves only restless craving, the eye forever aching to glimpse again what it briefly saw.

GATHA 2134

Confession and Sin

Confession, the fault-finding self

मराठी मूळ

मार्गे जैसा होता माझे अंगीं भाव । तैसा एक ठाव नाहीं आतां ॥१॥
 ऐसें गोही माझें मन मजपाशीं । तुटी मुदलेंसी दिसे पुढें ॥२॥
 पुढिलांचे मना आणि गुणदोष । पूज्य आपणांस करावया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने जाली कोंबड्याची परी । पुढें चि उकरी लाभ नेणें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The devotion I once felt in my being is no longer there as it was. My own mind bears witness: I see loss of the very principal ahead.

It brings up faults in others only to make itself seem worthy of worship. Says Tuka, I have become like a hen that scratches only at what lies ahead and does not recognize the true gain.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The devotion that once filled my being is not there now as it was. My own mind is witness against me: I see the very capital being lost ahead. I dig up the faults and merits of others only to make myself worth worshipping. Tuka says: I have become like a hen, scratching only at what lies in front, never knowing the real gain.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram catches himself in a precise inner corruption and refuses to excuse it. The old warmth of devotion has cooled, and his own mind testifies that he is losing the principal, the original capital, not just the interest. The symptom he names is sharp: he scans other people's faults and virtues, but only to set himself up as someone worthy of reverence. The hen that scratches forward for scraps and never recognizes true treasure is aimed at this pattern in himself, a warning to examine the same scratching impulse in oneself rather than to scorn another.

GATHA 2135

Prayers

Prayer, the mother will not kill her child

मराठी मूळ

किती तुजपाशीं देऊं परिहार । जाणसी अंतर पांडुरंगा ॥१॥
 आतां माझें हातीं देई हित । करीं माझें चित्त समाधान ॥१॥
 राग आला तरी कापूं नये मान । बाळा मायेविण कोण दुजें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसा होईल लौकिक । मागे बाळ भीक समर्थाचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How many excuses shall I offer You? You know the truth within, O Panduranga. Now place my welfare in my own hands; bring peace to my restless mind.

Even in anger, a mother should not cut the child's throat; who else does the child have besides its mother? Says Tuka, what a spectacle it would be: a child of the Capable One begging in the streets.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How many excuses shall I keep offering you? You know what is inside, Panduranga. Now put my good into my own hands; settle my restless mind into peace. Even when she is angry, a mother does not cut the child's throat; whom does the child have but its mother? Tuka says: what a public disgrace it would be, the child of the Capable One begging in the street.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram stops making excuses, since God already sees the truth within, and instead presses his claim as a child presses a parent. His argument is the mother's instinct: however angry she gets, she will not slaughter her own child, because the child has no one else. He turns this against God's reputation, the laukik, the public verdict: it would shame the Almighty if his own child were left begging in the streets. The prayer is not for comfort alone but for God to honor the bond that makes him responsible.

GATHA 2136

Confession and Sin

Confession, the thief asking for wages

मराठी मूळ

लाज वाटे पुढें तोंड दाखवितां । परि जाऊं आतां कोणापाशी ॥१॥
 चुकलिया काम मागतों मुशारा । लाज फजितखोरा नाहीं मज ॥१॥
 पाय सांडूनिया फिरतो बासर । स्वामिसेवे चोर होऊनियां ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज पाहिजे दंडिलें । पुढें हे घडलें न पाहिजे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am ashamed to show my face, yet where else shall I go? Having failed in my duty, I ask for wages; I, the shameless wretch, feel no embarrassment. Abandoning Your feet, I wander aimlessly, a thief to my master's service.

Says Tuka, I deserve to be punished; let this not happen again.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am ashamed to show my face, yet where else can I go now? I failed at the work and still demand my wages; shameless wretch, I feel no shame. Leaving your feet, I wander idle, a thief in my master's service. Tuka says: I deserve to be punished; only let this not happen again.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram stands before God like a servant who has both shirked the work and stolen, and he names it without softening. He failed his duty yet still wants payment, and worse, the shame that should stop him does not even register; abandoning God's feet, he wanders as a thief inside his own master's house. There is nowhere else to take this confession, which is exactly why he brings it here. He does not plead innocence; he accepts the punishment and asks only that the lapse not be repeated.

GATHA 2137

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the mother's hard mercy

मराठी मूळ

पुढिलिया सुखें निंब देतां भले । बहुत वारलें होय दुःख ॥१॥
 हें तों वर्म असे माउलीचे हातीं । हाणी मारी प्रीती हितासाठीं ॥२॥
 खेळतां विसरे भूक तान घर । घरुनियां कर आणी बळें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याणे पाळी तोंडळिचया घांसें । उदार सर्वस्वें सर्वकाळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A mother gives bitter medicine for the sake of future health, and much suffering is averted. This is the secret in a mother's hands: she strikes and scolds out of love, for the child's own good.

When the child, lost in play, forgets hunger, thirst, and home, she takes its hand and pulls it back by force. Says Tuka, she feeds it mouthful by mouthful, generous with everything she has at all times.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A mother gives the bitter neem for the sake of health to come, and much suffering is turned away. This is the secret held in a mother's hands: she strikes and scolds out of love, for the child's own good. When the child, lost in play, forgets hunger, thirst, and home, she takes its hand and pulls it back by force. Tuka says: she feeds it mouthful by mouthful, giving everything she has, at every hour.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers the fear that God's harshness means rejection by pointing to a mother. She forces bitter medicine and scolds and even drags the child home, and every one of these hard acts is done out of love and for the child's welfare. The blows are not the opposite of her care; they are the form her care takes when the child, absorbed in play, has forgotten what it needs. So apparent punishment from God is read here as the same tending hand. The poem closes on the gentler side of that same love: a mother who also feeds the child by hand, mouthful by mouthful, holding back nothing, always.

GATHA 2138

Prayers

Refuge, contact transforms the worthless

मराठी मूळ

आतां गुण दोष काय विचारिसी । मी तों आहे रासी पातकांची ॥१॥
 पतितपावनासवें समागम । अपुलाला धर्म चालवीजे ॥२॥
 घनघायें भेटी लोखंडपरिसा । तरी अनारिसा न पालटे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे माती कोण पुसे फुका । कस्तुरीच्या तुका समागमें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why do You weigh my merits and faults now? I am a mountain of sins. When one keeps the company of the Purifier of the Fallen, let each fulfill their own nature.

Even when iron strikes the philosopher's stone with great force, the stone does not change its nature. Says Tuka, who asks about the worth of clay? Through contact with musk, even clay becomes fragrant.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why weigh my merits and faults now? I am a heap of sins. In the company of the One who saves the fallen, let each keep to its own nature. Strike iron against the touchstone with heavy blows, and still the stone will not change. Tuka says: who pays a thing for plain clay? Yet beside musk, even clay takes on the fragrance.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells God to stop auditing his merits and faults, because he loses that accounting; he is simply a mountain of sin. His plea rests on what each party is: God's own nature is to purify the fallen, so let each do what it is, the sinner sinning, the Savior saving. The touchstone keeps its nature however hard the iron strikes it, and that steadiness is the point: God does not change toward the worthless. The closing image carries the hope, worthless clay is bought by no one, yet mere nearness to musk makes it fragrant, so nearness to God, not the devotee's worth, is what transforms him.

GATHA 2139

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the doting protector

मराठी मूळ

कृपावंता दुजें नाहीं तुह्मां पोटीं । लाडें बोलें गोठी सुख मातें ॥१॥
 घेउनि भातुकें लागसील पाठी । लाविसील ओंठीं ब्रह्मरस ॥२॥
 आपुलिये पांख घालिसी पाखर । उदार मजवर कृपाळू तूं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मांकारणें गोविंदा । वागविसी गदा सुदर्शन ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O merciful One, You hold no guile within You. Lovingly You speak sweet stories to comfort me.

You will follow me with gifts, pressing the nectar of divine wisdom to my lips. You spread the shelter of Your wings over me; You are generous and compassionate toward me.

Says Tuka, for our sake, O Govinda, You carry the mace and the Sudarshana discus.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Merciful one, there is no second thing inside you, no guile; you speak fond words and stories, and they comfort me. You come after me with treats and press the nectar of Brahman to my lips. You spread your own wing over me as shelter; you are generous to me, full of pity. Tuka says: for our sake, Govinda, you carry the mace and the Sudarshana discus.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures God as a parent so wholly loving that nothing else, no duplicity, lives inside him. This God coaxes the devotee with sweet talk and treats, and then, mid-play, slips the highest gift, the nectar of Brahman, the taste of the absolute, onto his lips. He shelters under his own wing like a bird over its young, generous and tender. The last line names the protector's other face: the very God who dotes also bears mace and discus, his weapons, and Tukaram insists he wields them for our sake, so the same love that feeds also defends.

GATHA 2140

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, carried through every birth

मराठी मूळ

पाळलों पोसिलों जन्मजन्मांतरीं । वागविलों करीं धरोनियां ॥१॥
 आतां काय माझा घडेल अद्देर । मागें बहु दूर वागविलें ॥२॥
 नेदी वारा अंगीं लागों आघाताचा । घेतला ठायींचा भार माथां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बोल करितों आवडी । अविट ते चि गोडी अंतरींची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You have nourished and protected me through birth after birth, guiding me by the hand. Will You now forsake me? In the past You have carried me through vast distances.

You do not let the wind of harm touch my body; You have taken the entire burden upon Your own head. Says Tuka, I speak these words with love; the sweetness within my heart is inexhaustible.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have raised me and fed me through birth after birth, leading me by the hand. Will you cast me off now, after carrying me so far already? You let no wind of harm touch my body; you took the whole weight onto your own head. Tuka says: I speak these words out of love; the sweetness within my heart never grows stale.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram appeals to a long history rather than a single moment of grace. God has reared and fed and led him not just in this life but across many births, so the question almost answers itself: after carrying him this far, surely God will not abandon him now. The protection is total, no harmful wind allowed to touch him, the whole burden taken onto God's own head. He ends by naming his own motive plainly: these are not bargaining words but words of love, springing from an inner sweetness that, unlike worldly pleasures, never goes flat.

GATHA 2141

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, asking for rebirth not release

मराठी मूळ

पांडुरंगा कांहीं आइकावी मात । न करावें मुक्त आतां मज ॥१॥
 जन्मांतरें मज तैसीं देई देवा । जेणें चरणसेवा घडे तुझी ॥२॥
 वाखाणीन कीर्ती आपुलिया मुखें । नाचेन मी सुखें तुजपुढें ॥३॥
 करुनि कामारी दास दीनाहुनी । आपुला अंगणीं ठाव मज ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी मृत्युलोकीं भले । तुझे चि अंखिले पांडुरंगा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Panduranga, hear my plea: do not grant me liberation. Give me birth after birth, O God, so that the service of Your feet may continue.

I will praise Your glory with my own lips and dance with joy before You. Make me a servant, humbler than the humblest; give me a place in Your own courtyard.

Says Tuka, here in this mortal world we are content; we are Yours and Yours alone, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Panduranga, hear my plea. Do not grant me liberation now. Give me birth after birth, O God, so that I may serve your feet. I will praise your glory with my own lips. I will dance before you in joy. Make me a servant, lower than the lowest; give me a place in your own courtyard. Tuka says: here in this mortal world we are content. We are yours, only yours, Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is asking God for the opposite of what most seekers want. He refuses moksha and begs instead for birth after birth, because release would end his service at Vitthal's feet. The thing he is afraid of losing is not life but nearness; he would rather be born again as the lowest servant in God's courtyard than escape the world and lose that. So he names the mortal world as the very place where his love can act, singing, dancing, serving, and he is content to stay in it as long as he belongs to Panduranga.

GATHA 2142

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, life sold at the feet

मराठी मूळ

माझे अंतरीचें तो चि जाणे एक । वैकुंठनायक पांडुरंग ॥१॥
 जीव भाव त्याचे ठेवियेला पायीं । मज चिंता नाही कवणेविशीं ॥२॥
 सुखसमारंभें संतसमागमें । गाऊं वाचे नाम विठोबाचें ॥३॥
 गातां पुण्य होय आइकतां लाभ । संसारबंद तुटतील ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे जीव तयासी विकिला । आणीक विठ्ठलाविण नेणें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Only He, the Lord of Vaikuntha, Panduranga, knows the depths of my chitta. Having placed my life and love at His feet, I have no worry of any kind.

In the joyful company of the saints, let us sing the name of Vithoba with our lips. Singing brings merit, listening brings gain, and the bonds of worldly life are cut.

Says Tuka, I have sold my jiva to Him; I know nothing and no one besides Vitthal.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Only he knows what is inside me, the Lord of Vaikuntha, Panduranga. I have laid my life and my heart at his feet. So I have no worry about anything. In the glad company of the saints, let us sing the name of Vithoba with our tongues. Singing it brings merit; hearing it brings gain; the bonds of worldly life are cut. Tuka says: I have sold my life to him. I know no one and nothing besides Vitthal.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram has handed his whole inner life over to God and found that the handover itself ends his anxiety. Because Panduranga alone knows what is in his heart, and because that heart now rests at God's feet, there is nothing left for Tukaram to manage or fear. The practice that carries this is the Name, sung among the saints: he claims it works on singer and listener alike, earning merit and severing the knots of samsara. The final line is the strongest: he has not lent or pledged his life but sold it outright, so that Vitthal is now the only one he knows.

GATHA 2143

*The Power of the Name**The Name, the sacred story as everything*

मराठी मूळ

कथा दुःख हरी कथा मुक्त करी । कथा याची बरी विठोबाची ॥१॥

कथा पाप नासी उद्धरिले दोषी । समाधि कथेसी मूढजना ॥२॥

कथा तप ध्यान कथा अनुष्ठान । अमृत हे पान हरिकथा ॥३॥

कथा मंत्रजप कथा हरी ताप । कथाकाळी कांप किळकाळासी ॥४॥

तुका ह्मणे कथा देवाचें ही ध्यान । समाधि लागोन उभा तेथें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*The sacred story destroys sorrow; the sacred story grants liberation. The best story is that of Vithoba.**The sacred story annihilates sin and purifies the wrongdoer; even the dullest soul attains samadhi through the story. The sacred story is penance, meditation, and discipline; the nectar of all nourishment is the story of Hari.**The story is the chanting of mantras; the story dispels all suffering; at the time of the story, even death trembles. Says Tuka, the sacred story is even God's own meditation; He stands there absorbed in samadhi.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

The story takes away sorrow; the story sets free. The best story is Vithoba's. The story destroys sin and lifts up the wrongdoer; through the story even the dull-witted reach samadhi. The story is penance, is meditation, is discipline; the story of Hari is nectar to drink. The story is the chanting of mantras; the story burns away suffering; when the story is told, death itself trembles. Tuka says: the story is even God's own meditation; he stands there, lost in samadhi.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is making one claim many times: hearing and telling the sacred story of God is itself the whole of religion. He stacks the disciplines that usually cost years, penance, meditation, mantra, ritual, and says the story does all of their work at once, and does it for everyone, even the dullest and the worst. The point is that the hard ladder of effort is replaced by something anyone can join, the simple telling of Hari's deeds. He pushes it to the limit at the end: the story is so powerful that God himself stands listening to it, absorbed, as though it were his own meditation.

GATHA 2144

Prayers

Prayer, asking the way to the feet

मराठी मूळ

काय ऐसा सांगा । धर्म मज पांडुरंगा ॥१॥
 तुझे पायीं पावें ऐसा । जेणें उगवे हा फांसा ॥२॥
 करीं कृपादान । तैसें बोलवीं वचन ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । माझें हृदय वसवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Tell me, O Panduranga, what dharma will bring me to Your feet and release me from this noose? Grant me the gift of grace; inspire the right words in my mouth. Says Tuka, O God, come and dwell in my heart.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tell me, Panduranga, what is the dharma for me? Show me the one that brings me to your feet, the one that undoes this noose. Grant me the gift of your grace; put the right words in my mouth. Tuka says: O God, come and live in my heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram does not assume he knows the path; he asks God to tell him which dharma actually leads to the feet. He names his condition as a noose, a bind he cannot loosen by himself, so the way out has to be given, not earned. That is why he asks for grace and even for the right words, admitting he cannot pray well on his own power. The final plea is the simplest and the largest: not a teaching about God but God himself, come to dwell in the heart.

GATHA 2145

Confession and Sin

Confession, the gap behind a good name

मराठी मूळ

भला ह्मणे जन । परि नाहीं समाधान ॥१॥
 माझें तळमळी चित्त । अंतरलें दिसे हित ॥२॥
 कृपेचा आधार । नाहीं दंभ जाला भार ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कृपे । अंतराय कोण्या पापें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

People call me good, but I have no inner peace. My chitta churns with unrest; true welfare seems to have slipped away.

There is no foundation of grace; pretense has become a burden. Says Tuka, what sin has caused this obstacle to Your compassion?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

People call me good, but I have no peace inside. My mind churns with unrest; the real good seems to have slipped away from me. I have no ground of grace under me; pretense has grown into a weight. Tuka says: by what sin is your mercy held back from me?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets his public reputation against what he actually feels and finds them at odds. Others praise him as good, but inwardly there is no rest, and the thing that truly matters seems lost; he even calls his outer show pretense, a burden he is carrying. Rather than defend himself, he turns the question on his own life and asks God what fault of his is keeping grace away. The honesty is the point: he refuses to mistake being called good for being at peace, and he looks inward for the blockage.

GATHA 2146

Confession and Sin

Confession, words without depth

मराठी मूळ

शिकविले बोल । बोलें तैसी नाहीं ओल ॥१॥
 आतां देवा संदेह नाहीं । वांयां गेलों यासी कांहीं ॥२॥
 एकांताचा वास । नाहीं संकल्पाचा नास ॥३॥
 बुद्ध नाहीं स्थिर । तुका ह्मणे शब्दा धीर ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I speak the words I have been taught, but there is no corresponding depth within. Now, O God, there is no doubt: I have gone to waste in some measure.

I dwell in solitude, yet my thoughts do not cease. Says Tuka, my intellect is unsteady, though my speech is patient.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I speak the words I was taught, but the wetness is not in them. Now, O God, there is no doubt: in some part I have gone to waste. I live alone, yet my plans and wishes do not die. Tuka says: my mind will not hold still, though my speech keeps its patience.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram admits that his outward devotion and his inward state have come apart. He can say the right words he was taught, but they are dry; the moisture of real feeling is missing, and he names this plainly as a kind of waste in himself. Even withdrawing into solitude has not stilled the stream of wanting and scheming inside. The honesty cuts deep: his speech stays calm and patient while his mind refuses to settle, and he will not pretend the calm surface is the truth of him.

GATHA 2147

Longing and Separation

Longing, why does God not come

मराठी मूळ

उचिताचा दाता । कृपावंता तूं अनंता ॥१॥
 कां रे न घालिसी धांव । तुझें उच्चारितां नांव ॥२॥
 काय बळयुक्ति । नाही तुझे अंगीं शक्ति ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे तूं विश्वंभर । ओस माझें कां अंतर ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You are the giver of what is right, O merciful and infinite One. Why then do You not rush to me when I call Your name? Have You lost Your strength and power? Says Tuka, You are the sustainer of the universe; why then is my heart so empty?

IN PLAIN WORDS

You are the giver of what is right, merciful and without end. Why then do you not come running when I call your name? Have you no strength left? Is there no power in your body? Tuka says: you hold up the whole world; why then is my heart left so empty?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses God with a complaint shaped as a question. He grants everything good about God, merciful, infinite, the giver of what is fitting, and uses that very goodness to ask why the call on the Name goes unanswered. The sting in the middle is mock challenge: surely God has not run out of strength. The last line lands the real wound: the one who sustains the entire universe is letting one heart stay empty, and Tukaram lays that emptiness directly at God's door rather than blaming himself.

GATHA 2148

Prayers

Prayer, swept off in the flood

मराठी मूळ

वाहवितों पुरीं । आतां उचित तें करीं ॥१॥
 माझी शक्ति नारायणा । कीव भाकावी करुणा ॥२॥
 आह्मां ओढी काळ । तुझें क्षीण झालें बळ ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे गोडी । जीवा मातेचिया ओढी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am being swept away in the flood; now do what is right, O Narayana. My only strength is to cry for mercy and plead with compassion.

Death pulls at me, and Your power seems to have waned. Says Tuka, the longing of a mother's chitta for her child is the sweetest ache.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am being carried away in the flood. Now do what is right, Narayana. My only strength is to cry for mercy and beg for your pity. Death is dragging at me, and your power seems to have grown weak. Tuka says: the sweet ache is a mother's heart pulled toward her child.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is in danger and out of resources, picturing himself swept off in a flood with death pulling at him. He has no strength of his own left to offer; all he can do is cry for mercy, so he throws the responsibility onto Narayana to do what is right. He even taunts God gently, as if God's power has weakened, to provoke the rescue. The closing image names the bond he is counting on: as a mother is pulled toward her child by a sweet, helpless ache, so he trusts God is drawn toward him.

GATHA 2149

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, laying down the whole load

मराठी मूळ

आतां घेई माझें । भार सकळ ही ओझें ॥१॥
 काय करिसी होई वाड । आलों पोटासीं दगड ॥२॥
 तूं चि डोळे वाती । होई दीपक सांगातीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कांहीं । विचाराया चाड नाहीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now take my burden, every last weight of it. What more can You do? I have come to You with a stone upon my belly.

You must become my eyes and the wick; be my lamp and companion. Says Tuka, there is nothing left to deliberate.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now take what is mine, the whole load, every weight of it. What more can you do? I have come to you with a stone on my belly. You be my eyes, and the wick; be my lamp and my companion. Tuka says: there is nothing left to think over.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram hands the entire burden of himself to God and refuses to keep any of it back. The image of a stone on the belly is one of starving helplessness; he comes with nothing but his need. Having given the weight away, he asks God to become his very faculties: his eyes, the wick and lamp by which he sees, his constant companion. The last line closes the matter; surrender has gone past the stage of weighing options, and there is nothing further to deliberate.

GATHA 2150

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, God the whole capital

मराठी मूळ

असोत हे बोल । अवघें तूं चि भांडवल ॥१॥
 माझा मायबाप देवा । सज्जन सोयरा केशवा ॥ध्रु॥
 गिळयेले भेद । सारियेले वादावाद ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे मधीं । आतां न पडे उपाधि॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let these words be as they may; You alone are my entire capital. You are my Father and Mother, O God; You are my true friend and kinsman, O Keshava.

All distinctions have been dissolved; all debates have been settled. Says Tuka, now let no further complication arise between us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let these words be whatever they are. You alone are my whole capital. You are my father and mother, O God; you are my true friend and kinsman, Keshava. All the distinctions are swallowed up; all the arguments are settled. Tuka says: now let no further trouble fall between us.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram drops every other claim and rests his whole worth on God, naming God his only capital, the sole wealth he has to trade on. He gathers all human relationships into one: father, mother, friend, kinsman are all Keshava. With that, the divisions and debates that kept him separate from God are dissolved and finished. The closing prayer asks for the result of surrender to hold: that no obstacle, no upadhi, ever come between them again.

GATHA 2151

The Power of the Name

The Name, crying to the Mother for her gift

मराठी मूळ

करीन कोल्हाळ । आतां हा चि सर्वकाळ ॥१॥
 आतां ये वो माझे आई । देई भातुकें विठाई ॥ध्रु॥
 उपायासी नाम । दिलें याचें पुढें क्षेम ॥२॥
 बीज आणि फळ । हें चि तुका ह्मणे मूळ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I will raise a clamor at all times from this day forward. Come now, O my Mother Vithai, and give me my gift.

The name is given as the remedy; its fulfillment lies ahead. Says Tuka, the name is both the seed and the fruit; it is the root of everything.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will keep up my clamor, from now on, all the time. Come now, my Mother Vithai, and give me my little gift. The Name was given as the remedy; its safe reward lies ahead. Tuka says: the Name is the seed and the fruit; it is the root of everything.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram takes the posture of a child who will not stop crying until it is fed, and addresses God as the Mother Vithai who must hand over the treat. The clamor is the practice itself: ceaseless calling on the Name, refusing to be quieted. He understands the Name as the medicine he has been given, with its full reward still ahead. The closing lines tell why he stakes everything on it: the Name is at once seed, fruit, and root, the means, the goal, and the ground beneath both.

GATHA 2152

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, the satisfaction of the Name

मराठी मूळ

धनासीं च धन । करी आपण जतन ॥१॥
 तुज आळवितां गोडी । पांडुरंगा खरी जोडी ॥२॥
 जेविल्याचें खरें । वरी उमटे ढेंकरें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे धाय । तेथें कोठें उरे हाय ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

True wealth takes care of itself. Calling upon You, O Panduranga, brings real sweetness, a genuine treasure.

The proof of a good meal shows itself in the belch that follows. Says Tuka, where there is true satisfaction, where does any longing remain?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Real wealth looks after itself. Calling on you, Panduranga, brings true sweetness, a real treasure. The truth of a good meal shows in the belch that comes after. Tuka says: where there is full satisfaction, what room is left for any aching want?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from experience, not request: he has tasted what calling on God actually yields. He calls it true wealth, the kind that does not need guarding because it keeps itself, unlike money. His earthy proof is the belch after a full meal: you know the meal was real by the satisfaction it leaves, and so you know the Name is real by the contentment it leaves in the heart. The closing question is the whole point; once that fullness is there, there is simply no space left for longing and lack.

GATHA 2153

*The Necessity of Experience**Union and longing held together*

मराठी मूळ

अनुभवा आलें । माझें चित्तीचें क्षरलें ॥१॥
 असे जवळी अंतर । फिरे आवडीच्या फेरें ॥२॥
 खादलें चि वाटे । खावें भेटलें चि भेटे ॥३॥ ॥१०॥
 तुका ह्मणे उभें । आह्मी राखियेलें लोभें ॥३॥ ॥१०॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What was hidden in my chitta has now come to experience and dissolved. He stays near, yet there remains a distance, for He circles around in the orbit of love.

Whatever is eaten still feels like it should be eaten more; whatever is met still longs to be met again. Says Tuka, we have kept Him standing before us, held fast by our longing.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What lay hidden in my heart has come into experience and dissolved. He is near, deep inside, yet a distance remains, for He keeps circling in the orbit of love. What I have eaten, I still want to eat; whom I have met, I still long to meet. Tuka says: we have kept Him standing before us, held fast by our longing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a meeting with Vitthal that is also still a hunger. The thing buried in his mind has surfaced into living experience and melted away, so the barrier is gone; yet he insists a sweet distance remains, because love keeps moving in circles around its object and never settles into mere possession. This is why the taste does not end the appetite: every eating asks to eat again, every meeting asks to meet again. The closing claim is bold. It is not God who holds the devotee, but the devotee's own longing that keeps God standing there before him.

GATHA 2154

*Confession and Sin**Confession, the decorated corpse*

मराठी मूळ

पोटीं शूळ अंगीं उटी चंदनाची । आवडी सुखाची कोण तया ॥१॥
 तैसें मज कां गा केलें पंढरिराया । लौकिक हा वांयां वाढविला ॥२॥
 ज्वरिलियापुढें वाढिलीं मिष्टानें । काय चवी तेणें घ्यावी त्याची ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मढें शृंगारिलें वरी । ते चि जाली परी मज देवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A boil on the belly and sandalwood paste on the body; what pleasure can such a person enjoy? O Lord of Pandhari, why have You treated me this way, increasing my worldly reputation to no purpose? When fine dishes are placed before one burning with fever, how can he taste their flavor? Says Tuka, a corpse has been decorated on the outside; that is what has become of me, O God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A boil burns in the belly while sandalwood paste is rubbed on the body; what pleasure can such a person feel? O Lord of Pandhari, why have You done this to me, building up my name in the world for nothing? Fine dishes are set before a man burning with fever; how can he taste their flavor? Tuka says: a corpse has been dressed up on the outside. O God, that is what I have become.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns on his own public reputation and calls it a torment. He gives two images of the same false comfort: cooling sandal paste smeared over a body with a boil eating it from within, and rich food laid before a man too feverish to taste anything. The outward honor the world has given him only mocks the sickness inside. He addresses Panduranga directly and asks why his name was raised so high to no purpose. The verdict on himself is unsparing: a corpse with no life in it, merely ornamented on the surface. The poem points the reader at the gap between an admired exterior and an inner state that admiration cannot heal.

GATHA 2155

Confession and Sin

Confession, gilding over brass

मराठी मूळ

बेगडाचा रंग राहे कोण काळ । अंगें हें पितळ न देखतां ॥१॥
 माझें चित्त मज जवळीच गो ही । तुझी मज नाहीं भेटी ऐसें ॥२॥
 दासीसुतां नाहीं पितियाचा ठाव । अवघें चि वाव सोंग त्याचें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझी केली विटंबना । अनुभवं जना येईल कळों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How long can the color of gilding last when the brass underneath goes unseen? My own mind is right here beside me, yet I have no true meeting with You. The son of a maidservant has no claim on his father; all his gestures are hollow pretense.

Says Tuka, I have been humiliated, and the world will come to know it through experience.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How long can gilding hold its color when the brass underneath is never seen? My mind is right here beside me, yet I have no real meeting with You. A maidservant's son has no claim on his father; every gesture of his is hollow pretense. Tuka says: I have been put to shame, and the world will learn it by experience.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram exposes himself as plating over base metal. Gold leaf laid over brass keeps its shine only until the cheap metal beneath shows through; he fears his devotion is exactly that thin a coating. His mind is close at hand, but it gives him no true meeting with God, and so his every devout gesture feels as baseless as a servant's son claiming a father who never acknowledged him. The harsh comparison is aimed at himself, not at any real child or servant: it names the shame of a claim with nothing behind it. He warns that pretense like this cannot stay hidden; sooner or later, lived experience exposes it to everyone.

GATHA 2156

Confession and Sin

Confession, lust and anger still seated

मराठी मूळ

मजपुढें नाहीं आणीक बोलता । ऐसें कांहीं चित्ता वाटतसें ॥१॥
 याचा कांहीं तुझीं देखा परिहार । सर्वज्ञ उदार पांडुरंगा ॥२॥
 काम क्रोध नाहीं सांडिलें आसन । राहिले वसोन देहामध्ये ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां जालों उतराई । कळों यावें पायीं निरोपिलें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

It seems to me that no one else speaks before me. Please find some remedy for this, O all-generous Panduranga.

Lust and anger have not left their seat; they continue to dwell in this body. Says Tuka, now I have become indebted. May it be known at Your feet that I have conveyed this message.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It feels to me that no one else speaks before me. You see to some remedy for this, all-generous Panduranga. Lust and anger have not given up their seat; they go on living inside this body. Tuka says: now I have settled my account. Let it be known at Your feet that I have delivered this message.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays his unfinished business openly before God. He admits a kind of self-deception, as though no voice but his own is allowed to speak in him, and he asks generous Panduranga to find the cure, since he cannot. The plain confession at the center is that lust and anger have never vacated their place; they are still residents in his body, not banished guests. By saying it aloud he claims to have cleared his debt: he has at least reported the truth honestly. The poem makes confession itself the act of service, handing the whole problem to God's feet rather than pretending it is already solved.

GATHA 2157

Social Criticism

Social criticism, hollow titles

मराठी मूळ

सावित्रीची विटंबण । रांडपण करीतसे ॥१॥
 काय जाळावें तें नांव । अवघें वाव असे तें ॥२॥
 कुबिर नांव मोळी वाहे । कैसी पाहें फजिती ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याणे ठुणगुण देखें । उगीं मूर्ख कुण्पदतां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Savitri's honor is disgraced; widowhood is imposed upon her. Why should one burn such a name that is all emptiness? Kubera by name, yet he carries bundles of wood on his head; see what a disgrace.

Says Tuka, look at this absurd spectacle, and stop applauding foolishly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Savitri's honor is disgraced; widowhood is forced on her. Why keep alive a name that is all emptiness? A man named Kubera carries bundles of firewood on his head; see what a disgrace it is. Tuka says: look at this absurd show, and stop applauding like a fool.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram mocks the gap between a grand name and an empty reality. A woman called Savitri, whose name recalls a wife who won her husband back from death, is left a widow; a man named Kubera, the lord of wealth, hauls firewood for a living. The names promise everything and deliver nothing, so he asks why such hollow labels should be honored at all. The sting is not aimed at the poor woman or the laborer themselves, but at the foolishness that keeps applauding empty titles. He tells the onlooker to stop clapping for a show that has no substance behind it.

GATHA 2158

Longing and Separation

Longing, the silent quarrel

मराठी मूळ

न गमेसी जाली दिवसरजनी । राहिलों लाजोनि नो बोलावें ॥१॥
 रुचिविण काय शब्द वाऱ्या माप । अनादरें कोप येत असे ॥२॥
 आपुलिया रडे आपुलें चि मन । दाटे समाधान पावतसें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याणे तुह्मी असा जी जाणते । काय करूं रिते वादावाद ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Days and nights have become unbearable. I have stayed silent out of shame, not daring to speak.

Without relish, words are mere empty measures; disregard brings anger. The mind weeps to itself, and is choked even as it tries to find peace.

Says Tuka, you are the knowing ones. Why should I engage in fruitless arguments?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Days and nights have become unbearable. I stay silent out of shame and do not dare to speak. Without relish, words are only empty measuring; and being ignored makes anger rise. The mind weeps to itself and chokes even as it tries to find peace. Tuka says: You are the one who knows. Why should I take up a pointless argument?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is caught in the misery of a love that goes unanswered. Day and night drag on, and shame keeps him from even speaking his complaint. When there is no warmth in the exchange, words become hollow, mere counting, and being disregarded stirs anger in him. So his mind turns inward and weeps alone, unable to reach the peace it reaches for. In the end he gives up the quarrel: God already knows everything, so arguing the case aloud would be empty. The poem holds the whole tension of waiting on a God who seems to withhold response.

GATHA 2159

Longing and Separation

Longing, refusing deferred grace

मराठी मूळ

मेल्यावरि मोक्ष संसारसंबंधें । आरालिया बधे ठेवा आह्मां ॥१॥
वागवीत संदेह राहों कोठवरी । मग काय थोरी सेवकाची ॥२॥
गाणें गीत आह्मां नाचणें आनंदें । प्रेम कोठें भेदें अंगा येतें ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे किती सांगावे दृष्टांत । नसतां तूं अनंत सानकुळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Liberation after death, bound by worldly ties; keep us bound for now. How long shall we carry this doubt? Then what greatness remains in being a servant? Our singing and dancing in joy, our songs and celebrations; where does love arise through separation? Says Tuka, how many illustrations must I give when You, O Infinite One, are not favorable?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Liberation after death, while we stay bound by worldly ties; keep us bound, then, for now. How long are we to carry this doubt? What greatness is left in being a servant then? Singing, dancing in joy, our songs and our festivals: where does love arise out of separation? Tuka says: how many examples must I keep giving, while You, O Infinite One, will not relent?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram rejects a salvation postponed to after death. If liberation only comes once he is dead, while he stays tangled in the world the whole time he is alive, then he would rather God simply keep him bound and stop dangling the promise. Endless waiting in doubt drains all dignity from being God's servant. He insists that love is

shown now, in singing and dancing and shared festival, not produced by separation and delay. The closing line is a frustrated appeal: he has offered example after example, yet the Infinite One stays unmoved. The poem presses for presence in this life rather than a deferred reward.

GATHA 2160

*Longing and Separation**Longing, the lover withdrawn*

मराठी मूळ

एकाएकीं आतां असावेंसें वाटे । तरि च हे खोटे चाळे केले ॥१॥
 वाजवूनि तोंड घातलों बाहेरी । कुल्प करुनी दारीं माजी वसा ॥२॥
 उजेडाचा केला दाटोनि अंधार । सवें हुद्देदार चेष्टाविला ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे भय होतें तों चि वरी । होती कांहीं उरी स्वामिसेवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If now You wish to be all alone, then these antics were false indeed. You made a show of speaking and then cast me outside, locking the door with Yourself within.

You turned the light into thick darkness and mocked the attendant as well. Says Tuka, as long as there was fear, there was still some remnant of service to the Lord.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If now You want to be all alone, then these games were false from the start. You made a show of speaking, then threw me outside, locked the door, and kept Yourself within. You turned the light into thick darkness, and mocked Your own attendant along with it. Tuka says: only as long as there was fear was there any service of the Lord left.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram protests being shut out by the very God who first drew him close. If God now wants solitude, then all the earlier intimacy looks like a cruel pretense: a show of talking, followed by the devotee being pushed out and the door bolted from inside. The light he was given has been turned into deep darkness, and the servant who waited faithfully feels made fun of. The last line is sharp: it was fear that kept service alive, and now even that thread seems to be slipping. The poem voices the anguish of withdrawn grace and the lover's right to complain when the door is closed in his face.

GATHA 2161

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the one in the heart

मराठी मूळ

काय नव्हेसी तूं एक । देखों कासया पृथक ॥१॥
 मुंग्या केंचे मुंगळे । नटनाटए तुझे चाळे ॥२॥
 जाली तरी मर्यादा । किंवा त्रासावें गोविंदा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे साचा । कोठें जासी हृदयींचा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What is there that You are not? Why should we see You as separate? Ants and their hills are all Your playful acts and dramatic performances. If there is a boundary, let it be set, or else trouble us, O Govinda.

Says Tuka, O true One, where can You go, You who dwell in the heart?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What is there that You are not? Why should we see You as separate? Ants and anthills alike are all Your play, Your acting and Your dramas. If there is to be a limit, set one; otherwise, why trouble us, O Govinda? Tuka says: O true One, where can You go, You who live in the heart?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses the non-dual claim that nothing stands outside God. If God is everything, then seeing him as a separate object makes no sense; even ants and their hills are simply roles in his ongoing play. So Tukaram challenges Govinda directly: either fix some honest boundary to what you are, or stop troubling us with the illusion of distance. The closing line answers its own question and seals the point. A God who dwells in the heart has nowhere to run to and nowhere to hide, because the seeker and the sought share the same ground.

GATHA 2162

Longing and Separation

Longing, the Father who must not vanish

मराठी मूळ

कां जी वाढविलें । न लगतां हें उगलें ॥१॥
 आतां मानितां कांटाळा । भोवतीं मिळालिया बाळा ॥२॥
 लावूनियां सवे । पळतां दिसाल बरवे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बापा । येतां न कळा चि रूपा ॥३॥ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why did You nurture us when it was not needed? Now You feel weary as the children have gathered around You. If You run away after leading them on, it will not look good.

Says Tuka, O Father, when You come, may You not be recognized in disguise.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why did You raise us up when there was no need? Now You feel weary, with the children gathered all around You. If You lead them on and then run away, it will not look good. Tuka says: O Father, when You come, may You not come unrecognized in disguise.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as one of God's gathered children and holds the Father to account. If God had no need to nurture them, why did he draw them close and raise them at all? Now that they crowd around him, he must not act weary and slip away, for a parent who lures the little ones in and then flees has shamed himself. The final plea is tender and pointed: when God does come, let him come openly, not hidden in some disguise the children cannot recognize. The poem treats divine love as a promise that carries an obligation: having claimed us, God cannot simply withdraw.

GATHA 2163

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, feed the hungry first

मराठी मूळ

क्षुधेलिया अन्न । द्यावें पात्र न विचारुन ॥१॥
 धर्म आहे वर्मा अंगीं । कळलें पाहिजे प्रसंगीं ॥२॥
 द्रव्य आणि कन्या । येथें कुळ कर्म शोधण्या ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पुण्य गांठी । तरि च उचितासी भेटी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

To the hungry, give food without examining the vessel. The essence of dharma lies within; it must be shown in the right occasion.

For matters of wealth and marriage, one should examine lineage and conduct. Says Tuka, only if merit is in hand does one meet with what is fitting.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To the hungry, give food without inspecting the vessel. The heart of dharma lies within, and it must show itself at the right moment. In matters of wealth and of marriage, you do examine lineage and conduct. Tuka says: only if merit is in hand does one meet with what is fitting.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram draws a clear line between mercy and prudence. When someone is hungry, you feed them and do not pause to scrutinize who they are or what their standing is, because the true essence of dharma is inward and proves itself precisely in such moments of need. He grants that other matters, settling property or arranging a marriage, are different, and there it is right to weigh family and character. The closing line ties it to merit: meeting what is truly fitting depends on the good one already carries. The poem keeps compassion and discernment each in its proper place, and refuses to let caution block the feeding of the hungry.

GATHA 2164

True Worship

True worship, spend your life

मराठी मूळ

वेचावें तें जीवें । पूजा घडे ऐशा नावें ॥१॥
 बिगारीची ते बिगारी । साक्षी अंतरीचा हरी ॥२॥
 फळ बीजाऐसें । कार्यकारणासरिसें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मान । लवणासारिखें लवण ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One should spend one's very life; only then can worship truly happen. Forced labor remains forced labor, and Hari within is the witness.

The fruit is like the seed; the effect follows its cause. Says Tuka, honor is like salt; it must be true salt, nothing less.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You must spend your very life; only then does worship truly happen. Forced labor stays forced labor, and Hari within is the witness. The fruit is like the seed; the effect follows its cause. Tuka says: honor is like salt; it must be true salt, nothing less.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures worship by what it costs the worshipper. Real devotion means spending your own life into it; anything offered grudgingly is just forced labor, and the Hari seated within sees plainly which it is. He grounds this in plain law: a fruit takes after its seed, an effect after its cause, so a half-hearted offering can only yield a half-hearted result. The final image makes the standard absolute. As salt is worthless unless it is genuinely salt, honor given to God is worthless unless it is wholehearted and true. The poem points the reader inward, to the witness who cannot be fooled by outward show.

GATHA 2165

Longing and Separation

Longing, the deadlock of karma

मराठी मूळ

मज नाही धीर । तुझी न करा अंगीकार ॥१॥
 ऐसें पडिलें विषम । बळी देवाहूनि कर्म ॥२॥
 चालों नेणें वाट । केल्या न पवा बोभाट ॥३॥
 वेचों नेणे जीवें । तुका उदास धरिला देवें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have no patience, and You do not accept me. Such a dilemma has fallen upon me, where karma is mightier than God.

I do not know the path, and crying out brings no help. Says Tuka, I cannot spend my life this way; God has kept me in indifference.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have no patience left. And You will not take me in. I am caught in a hard place: my karma is stronger than my God. I do not know the road. I cry out, and nothing comes. I do not know how to spend my own life. Tuka says: God has left me here, indifferent.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out a deadlock and refuses to soften either side of it. He has run out of patience, yet God still has not accepted him, and he names the trap plainly: his own past deeds seem to outweigh God himself. He does not know the way, his cries draw no answer, and he cannot manage even the spending of his days. The pain in the poem is that God appears to stand back and leave him in this indifference, and Tukaram says so to God's face rather than pretending the longing has been met.

GATHA 2166

Longing and Separation

Longing, the mind that runs to God

मराठी मूळ

तळमळी चित्त दर्शनाची आशा । बहु जगदीशा करुणा केली ॥१॥
 वचनीं च संत पावले स्वरूप । माझें नेदी पाप योगा येऊं ॥२॥
 वेठीऐसा करीं भक्तिवेवसाव । न पवे चि जीव समाधान ॥३॥ ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे कई देसील विसांवा । पांडुरंगे धांवा घेतें मन ॥३॥ ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My chitta aches with longing for Your vision. O Lord of the universe, You have shown great mercy.

The saints have attained Your form through words alone, but my sins will not let me come near. I serve You as if under forced labor, yet my jiva finds no peace.

Says Tuka, when will You give rest? O Panduranga, my mind runs toward You.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My mind aches with longing to see You. O Lord of the universe, You have shown me great mercy. The saints reached Your very form through their words alone; but my sin will not let me come near. I serve You like a laborer pressed into work, and still my soul finds no peace. Tuka says: when will You give me rest? O Panduranga, my mind runs to You.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praying out of a restless, aching desire to see God's form, and he holds two truths together without resolving them. He grants that God has been merciful and that the saints attained that form through words; yet he feels his own sin barring him from coming close. His service feels like forced labor rather than love, so his soul finds no rest, and the whole poem strains toward one question: when will God grant relief? He ends not in despair but in motion, his mind running toward Panduranga even while peace is withheld.

GATHA 2167

Confession and Sin

Confession, the tendencies that will not be reined in

मराठी मूळ

हागतां ही खोडी । चळण मोडवितें काडी ॥१॥
 ऐसे अनावर गुण । आवरावे काय ह्युण ॥२॥
 नाहीं जरी संग । तरी बडबडविती रंग ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even while relieving oneself, bad habits persist; the stick keeps breaking the ankle. Such are these uncontrollable tendencies; how can they be restrained? Even without company, the senses keep up their chatter.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Even while relieving myself, the bad habit stays; the stick keeps tripping up my step. Such are these tendencies, beyond all control. How am I to rein them in? Even when there is no company, the senses keep up their chatter.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is confessing how stubborn his own habits are, and he refuses to dress it up. He says the tendencies cling even in the most undignified moments and keep tripping him as he walks, which is his blunt way of admitting they reach into everything. He cannot find a way to hold them in check. He points to the proof: even alone, with no one to perform for, the senses go on chattering, so the fault is inward and not just a matter of bad company. The honesty is aimed at the pattern in himself, not at scorn for anyone else.

GATHA 2168

Confession and Sin

Confession, service that never comes

मराठी मूळ

तुका ह्यणे देवा । तुमची न घडे चि सेवा ॥३॥ ॥१॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Says Tuka, O God, true service to You simply does not come to pass.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka says: O God, true service to You simply never comes to pass.

WHAT IT MEANS

This short signature line is Tukaram's confession in its barest form. He admits to God that the real service he owes never actually happens. He does not blame circumstances or make an excuse; he simply states the failure and lays it before God. The starkness is the point: he would rather name his shortfall honestly than pretend a devotion he has not lived.

GATHA 2169

Confession and Sin

Confession, words without the melting heart

मराठी मूळ

देह निरसे तरी । बोलावया नुरे उरी ॥१॥
 येर वाचेचें वाग्जाळ । अळंकारापुरते बोल ॥२॥
 काचें तरी कडे । जाती ऐसें चित्त ओढे ॥३॥
 विष्णुदास तुका । पूर्ण धनी जाणे चुका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If the body is transcended, nothing remains to be spoken. All else is mere verbal ornamentation, words for the sake of decoration.

If one could truly melt from within, the mind would be drawn that way. Says Tuka, the perfect Lord knows well the shortcomings of Vishnudas.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Once the body is left behind, nothing is left to say. All the rest is just a net of words, talk for the sake of ornament. If the heart could truly melt, the mind would be drawn that way. Tuka says: Vishnudas. The perfect Lord knows my failings well.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is measuring his own speech against real surrender and finding it short. He says that beyond the body there is nothing more to be spoken; everything else is decorative chatter, words strung up for show. True devotion would mean the heart actually melting, and then the mind would be pulled toward God on its own. Signing as Vishnudas, the servant of Vishnu, he admits that his Lord, who is complete, sees clearly where he falls short. The poem turns the suspicion of empty words back on himself rather than on others.

GATHA 2170

Confession and Sin

Social criticism, glass is not a diamond

मराठी मूळ

खोटएाचा विकरा । येथें नव्हे कांच हिरा ॥१॥
 काय दावायाचें काम । उगा च वाढवावा श्रम ॥२॥
 परीक्षकाविण । मिरवों जाणों तें तें हीण ॥३॥
 तुका पायां पडे । वाद पुरे हे झगडे ॥३॥ ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is no sale for the false here; glass cannot pass for diamond. What is the point of showing off and increasing toil for nothing? To parade without an examiner is to display what is inferior.

Says Tuka, I fall at Your feet; enough of these quarrels and disputes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The false finds no buyer here; glass cannot pass for a diamond. What is the use of showing off? You only pile up labor for nothing. To parade without a true judge present is to put your own poverty on display. Tuka says: I fall at Your feet. Enough of these quarrels and disputes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing pretense and turning away from it toward God. In God's presence, he says, fakery finds no market; a piece of glass will never be taken for a diamond, so display is wasted effort. To show off where no real judge can tell the difference only reveals how cheap one's wares actually are. The poem ends by abandoning the whole game: he falls at God's feet and calls a halt to the arguing and contention, choosing surrender over the performance of merit. The criticism is aimed at the impulse to parade, including in himself, not at any one rival.

GATHA 2171

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, Pandhari and its hidden cost

मराठी मूळ

पंढरीस घडे अतित्यायें मृत्य । तो जाय पतित अधःपाता ॥१॥
 दुराचारें मोक्ष सुखाचे वसति । भोळी बाळमूतिन पांडुरंग ॥२॥
 केला न सहावे तीर्थउपवास । कथेविण दोषसाधन तें ॥३॥
 कालियापें भेद मानितां निवडे । श्रोत्रियांसी जोडे आंतेजेता ॥४॥
 माहेरीं सलज्ज ते जाणा सिंदळी । किळमा काजळी पावविते ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If a guest dies at Pandhari, the one responsible falls to perdition. Even wrongdoers find liberation and comfort there, for Panduranga is an innocent, childlike form.

Fasting and pilgrimages done without hearing God's story become instruments of sin. Those who make distinctions based on caste find the excluded joining the learned.

Says Tuka, the woman who is modest at her parents' home but immoral elsewhere brings only blackness.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If a guest dies at Pandhari, the one who let it happen falls to ruin. Even wrongdoers find liberation and ease there, for Panduranga is an innocent, childlike form. Fasts and pilgrimages done without listening to God's story turn into instruments of sin. Where people split others by caste, the very ones they shut out end up joined to the learned. A woman modest at her father's house but loose elsewhere brings only blackness. Know this.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram praises Pandhari while warning that its grace carries real duties. He says God's place is so merciful that even wrongdoers are saved there, because Panduranga is innocent and childlike; but that mercy is not a license to neglect, and to let a guest die there is to fall to ruin. He then turns the standard religion inside out: fasting and pilgrimage without truly hearing God's story become sources of sin, and those excluded by caste pride are the ones God draws in beside the learned. His closing image of a woman decent only at home is aimed at hidden hypocrisy: piety that is genuine in one place and false in another leaves only stain. He does not thin these sharp claims into polite advice.

GATHA 2172

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, faith and the river bath

मराठी मूळ

तुका ह्याने तेथें विश्वास जतन । पुरे भीमास्नान सम पाय ॥५॥ ॥१॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Says Tuka, at that place faith must be guarded well. A bath in the Bhima river and the touch of His feet are equal blessings.

Enough.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka says: there, faith must be guarded well. A bath in the Bhima river and the touch of His feet are equal blessings. Enough.

WHAT IT MEANS

This closing verse names what holds the whole teaching together at Pandhari: faith, which must be carefully kept. Tukaram sets the bath in the Bhima river and the touch of God's feet side by side as equal graces, so that the outward act and the nearness to God are valued together. The short final word, enough, lets the matter rest, as if nothing more needs to be added once faith is in place.

GATHA 2173

Social Criticism

Social criticism, cleverness against truth

मराठी मूळ

चातुर्याच्या अनंतकळा । सत्या विरळा जाणत ॥१॥
 हांसत्यासर्वे हांसे जन । रडतां भिन्न पालटे ॥२॥
 जळो ऐसे वांजट बोल । गुणां मोल भूस मिथ्या ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे अंधळ्याऐसें । वोंगळ पिसें कौतुक ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Cleverness has endless tricks, but rare is the one who knows truth. The world laughs with those who laugh and turns away from those who weep.

Let such hollow words burn; they assign false value to qualities and dismiss what is real. Says Tuka, it is like the delight of the blind, a filthy madness parading as wonder.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Cleverness has endless tricks; rare is the one who knows the truth. People laugh along with the one who laughs and turn away when he weeps. Let such hollow words burn: they price up empty qualities and call the real thing worthless. Tuka says: it is like the delight of the blind, a filthy madness paraded as a wonder.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram attacks shallow cleverness and the crowd that rewards it. He notes that wit has endless tricks while real knowledge of truth is rare, and that people are fickle: they laugh with you while you laugh and abandon you when you weep. He wishes such hollow talk would burn, because it inflates worthless show and dismisses what is genuine. His closing image is harsh on purpose: this acclaim is like the blind admiring a spectacle, a dirty madness mistaken for marvel. The contempt is pointed at the empty pattern of fashion-following, not at any single person caught in it.

GATHA 2174

Prayers

Prayer, against lust and anger

मराठी मूळ

नयो वाचे अनुचित वाणी । नसो मनीं कुडी बुद्धि ॥१॥
 ऐसें मागा अरे जना । नारायणा विनवूनि ॥२॥
 कामक्रोधां पडो चिरा । ऐसा बरा सायास ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नानाछंदें । या विनोदें न पडावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

May improper speech never come to my tongue. May crooked thinking never dwell in my mind.

Pray to Narayana thus, O people. May lust and anger be shattered; let that be your endeavor.

Says Tuka, do not fall into the various diversions and amusements of this world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let no improper word come to my tongue. Let no crooked thought live in my mind. Ask for this, O people, praying to Narayana. Let lust and anger be cracked apart; make that your good labor. Tuka says: do not fall into the many fads and amusements of this world.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram offers a plain prayer and tells others to make it their own. He asks that no wrong speech reach his tongue and no twisted thinking lodge in his mind, and he turns to the listeners, urging them to petition Narayana for the same. The real work, he says, is to break lust and anger; that is the endeavor worth giving oneself to. He warns against being pulled into the endless distractions and amusements of the world, naming them as the trap that pulls the mind off this single aim.

GATHA 2175

Renunciation

Renunciation, free of honor and esteem

मराठी मूळ

माझिया देहाची मज नाहीं चाड । कोठें करुं कोड आणि कांचें ॥१॥
 इच्छतां ते मान मागा देवापासीं । आसा संचितासी गुंपले हो ॥२॥
 देह आह्मी केला भोगाचे सांभाळीं । राहिलों निराळीं मानामानां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कोणें वेचावें वचन । नसतां तो सीण वाढवावा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have no care for my own body. How then can I attend to others' desires? If you crave honor, ask it of God; you are all entangled in the net of past karma.

We have given this body over to the care of destiny and remain aloof from the game of worldly respect. Says Tuka, why should anyone waste words when it only increases pointless suffering?

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have no care for my own body. So how can I tend to what others want? If you crave honor, ask it of God; you are all tangled in the net of your own past deeds. We have handed this body over to the keeping of destiny, and we stay apart from the game of respect and disrespect. Tuka says: why should anyone waste words, when it only adds to pointless suffering?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram declares his freedom from the whole economy of esteem. He has stopped caring even for his own body, so he has no stake in satisfying other people's wants. To those who hunger for honor he says: take that request to God, and recognize that you are bound up in the consequences of your own past actions. He has placed his body in destiny's hands and stepped outside the game of being respected or slighted. He closes by refusing to argue the point, since words spent defending one's standing only multiply needless suffering.

GATHA 2176

Renunciation

Renunciation, desire flees the grasper

मराठी मूळ

धरितां इच्छा दुरी पळे । पाठी सोहळे उदासा ॥१॥
 ह्मणऊनि असट मन । नका खुण सांगतों ॥२॥
 आविसापासी अवघें वर्म । सोस श्रम पाववी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बीज न्यावें । तेथें यावें फळानें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When you chase desire, it runs away; but luxury follows the one who is detached. Therefore, be steadfast in mind; I tell you this secret.

All the hidden truth lies with the dispassionate one; yearning and toil only bring exhaustion. Says Tuka, carry the seed, and the fruit will come to that very place.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Grab at desire and it runs away; but good fortune follows the one who lets go. So keep the mind steady. Do not waver. I am telling you the secret. The whole hidden truth lies with the dispassionate one; craving and toil only wear you out. Tuka says: carry the seed, and the fruit will come to that very place.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram hands over a practical secret about desire. What you chase flees from you, while ease and good fortune quietly attend the one who has let go, so the way forward is a steady, unwavering mind rather than more grasping. The real understanding belongs to the dispassionate; longing and effort spent on getting things only exhaust a person. His closing image makes it concrete: simply carry the seed, that is, give yourself to detachment and to God, and the fruit will arrive on its own, right where you are, without your having to seize it.

GATHA 2177

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the empty arguer

मराठी मूळ

वेद शास्त्र नाहीं पुराण प्रमाण । तयाचें वदन नावलोका ॥१॥
 ताकियर्चाचें अंग आपणा पारिखें । माजिःयासारिखें वाईचाळे ॥२॥
 माता निंदी तया कोण तो आधार । भंगलें खपर याचे नावें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आडरणें ज्याची चाली । तयाची ते बोली मिठेंविण ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One whose speech has no authority from Vedas, scriptures, or Puranas is not worth looking at. The logician's body is a stranger to itself, and his gestures are like those of a monkey.

He who slanders his own mother has no support; his broken vessel is his only legacy. Says Tuka, the words of one who walks crookedly are without salt.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A man whose speech has no backing from the Vedas, the scriptures, or the Puranas: do not even look at his face. The mere logician is a stranger to his own body. He apes and gestures like a monkey, the way I once did. He who slanders his own mother, what ground does he stand on? A broken pot is all he leaves behind in his name. Tuka says: the man who walks crookedly speaks words with no salt in them.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is attacking a kind of speech, not a particular man. He warns against the clever talker whose words rest on nothing the tradition stands on, and likens his showy gestures to a monkey aping what it does not understand. The slander of one's own mother is the image of cutting off your own root: a person who does this has no support and leaves only a broken vessel behind. The closing line names the test: speech that comes from a crooked life has no flavor, no nourishment in it. The pattern to watch in yourself is talk that performs and argues but is rooted in nothing true.

GATHA 2178

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, devotion merges into God

मराठी मूळ

कस्तुरीचें अंगीं मीनली मृत्तिका । मग वेगळी कां येईल लेखूं ॥१॥
तयापरि भेद नाहीं देवभक्तीं । संदेहाच्या युक्ति सरों घाव्या ॥२॥
इंधनें ते आगी संयोगाच्या गुणें । सागरा दुरुषणें वाहाळ तों चि ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे माझें साक्षीचें वचन । येथें तों कारण शुद्ध भाव ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When earth mingles with musk, how can they be separated again? In the same way there is no difference between God and devotion; let the doubts of logic be put to rest. Firewood becomes fire by contact; a stream is a stream only until it reaches the sea.

Says Tuka, my words bear witness: what matters here is pure faith.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When earth is mixed into musk, how could you count them as two again? It is like that: there is no gap between God and devotion. Let the tricks of doubt and logic come to an end. Wood becomes fire by touching it. A stream is a stream only until it reaches the sea. Tuka says: my words stand as witness; here the one thing that matters is pure faith.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is reporting from experience that devotion and God are not two things. He gives three images of merging: earth ground into musk cannot be sifted out again, wood touched by fire becomes fire, a stream keeps its name only until the ocean takes it. In each case the smaller thing loses its separate identity in the greater. He tells

the doubting, calculating mind to stop, because this is not a thing logic can divide. What carries a person across is not argument but pure, single-hearted faith.

GATHA 2179

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, the three together

मराठी मूळ

भक्ति तें नमन वैराग्य तो त्याग । ज्ञान ब्रह्मीं भोग ब्रह्मतनु ॥१॥
 देहाच्या निरसनं पाविजे या ठाया । माझी ऐसी काया जंव नव्हे ॥२॥
 उदक अग्नि धान्य जाल्या घडे पाक । एकाविण एक कामा नये ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज केले ते चांचणी । बडबडीची वाणी अथवा सत्य ॥३॥ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Devotion is bowing, dispassion is renunciation, and knowledge is the experience of Brahman in a body made of Brahman. These states are reached by transcending the body, so long as one does not say 'this body is mine.' Just as cooking requires water, fire, and grain together, and no one element suffices alone, so too all three are needed.

Says Tuka, they have tested me to see whether my speech is mere prattle or truth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Devotion is bowing low. Dispassion is letting go. Knowledge is to taste Brahman in a body that is itself Brahman. You reach this place by setting the body aside, by no longer saying this body is mine. Cooking needs water, fire, and grain together; not one of them does the work alone. Tuka says: they have tested me, to see whether my speech is only chatter or the truth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram defines three things plainly and then says they must work as one. Devotion is the act of bowing, dispassion is real renunciation, and knowledge is the lived taste of Brahman, found once the body stops being clung to as mine. He insists none of these stands alone, the way cooking needs water, fire, and grain together and no single ingredient will feed you. The closing line is his own stake: he has been put to the test, and he claims his words are truth and not idle talk. The point is that the path is not one trick but the whole of it held together.

GATHA 2180

The Saints

Saints, gratitude for grace

मराठी मूळ

श्रीसंतांचिया माथा चरणांवरी । साष्टांग हें करीं दंडवत ॥१॥
 विश्रांती पावलों सांभाळउत्तरीं । वाढलें अंतरीं प्रेमसुखें ॥२॥
 डौरली हे काया कृपेच्या वोरसें । नव्हे अनारिसें उद्धरलों ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज न घडतां सेवा । पूर्वपुण्यठेवा वोडवला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I bow my head prostrate at the feet of the blessed saints. I have found rest through their reassuring words, and love and joy have grown within.

This body has blossomed under the rain of their grace; I have been uplifted, transformed beyond recognition. Says Tuka, though I could not serve them properly, the treasure of past merit has come to my aid.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I lay my head on the feet of the blessed saints. I bow flat on the ground before them. Their steadying words have given me rest. Love and joy have grown inside me. This body has bloomed in the downpour of their grace. I am not what I was; I have been lifted up. Tuka says: though I never served them as I should, the store of merit from before has come to my aid.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is thanking the saints and crediting them, not himself, for his change. He prostrates fully before them and says it was their reassuring words that gave him rest and made love and joy grow within him. The image of the body blooming under rain says the transformation came from their grace falling on him, not from his own effort. He admits he never managed to serve them properly, so he assigns even his good fortune to merit stored up from an earlier time. The whole poem keeps the credit outside the self.

GATHA 2181

The Saints

Saints, the missed meeting

मराठी मूळ

नेणों काय नाड । आला उचित काळा आड ॥१॥
 नाहीं जाली संतभेटी । येवढी हानी काय मोठी ॥२॥
 सहज पायांपासीं । जवळी पावलिया ऐसी ॥३॥
 चुकी जाली आतां काय । तुका ह्मणे उरली हाय ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I do not know what obstacle came in the way at the appointed time. Not meeting the saints is truly the greatest loss.

Even when I had come so close to their feet, I missed the chance. Says Tuka, the opportunity is lost now, and only regret remains.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I do not know what got in the way. Something blocked me at the very time I should have gone. The meeting with the saints did not happen. Is there any greater loss than this? I had come so near, right up to their feet. And the chance slipped. The mistake is made now; what can I do? Tuka says: only the ache of it is left.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is grieving a meeting with the saints that he failed to keep. He does not know what obstacle stopped him at the appointed hour, and he names this missed meeting as the greatest loss a person can suffer. The sharp pain is that he was already close, right at their feet, and still let the moment go. He does not excuse it; he calls it his own mistake and says nothing can undo it now. What remains is regret, which the poem holds up as a warning not to let such a chance pass.

GATHA 2182

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the single refuge

मराठी मूळ

आणीक कांहीं नेणें । असें पायांच्या चिंतनें ॥१॥
 माझा न व्हावा विसर । नाहीं आणीक आधार ॥२॥
 भांडवल सेवा । हा चि ठेवियेला ठेवा ॥३॥
 करीं मानभावा । तुका विनंती करी देवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I know nothing else; I live in the contemplation of Your feet. May I never forget You, for I have no other support.

Service is my capital; this is the only treasure I have stored. Says Tuka, I make this humble plea to You, O God, with all sincerity.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I know nothing else. I live in the thought of Your feet. Let me never forget You; I have no other support. Service is my only capital. This is the one treasure I have laid up. Tuka says: with all my heart I make this plea to You, O God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praying for one thing only: never to forget God. He says he knows nothing else and dwells entirely in the thought of God's feet, which are his only support. He owns no wealth but service, and he calls that his single stored-up treasure. The poem is a plain, whole-hearted petition, narrowing everything down to remembrance and devotion. It models a faith that asks for nothing but the grace to keep holding on.

GATHA 2183

Autobiography

Autobiography, the stammering child

मराठी मूळ

आरुश माझी वाणी बोंबडीं उत्तरे । केली ते लेकुरें सलगी पायीं ॥१॥
 करावें कवतुक संतीं मायबापीं । जीवन देउनि रोपीं विस्तारिजे ॥२॥
 आधारें वदली प्रसादाची वाणी । उच्छष्टसेवणी तुमचिया ॥३॥ ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे हे चि करितों विनंती । मागोनि पुढती सेवादान ॥३॥ ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My speech is rough, my words stammering; like a child, I have taken liberties at Your feet. O saints, O mother and father, nurture this as one would a tender plant, giving it water to grow.

It is by Your grace that this tongue has spoken, feeding on the remnants of Your own words. Says Tuka, this alone is my prayer: grant me the gift of service again and again.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My speech is rough, my words come out stammering. Like a child I have taken liberties at Your feet. O saints, my mother and father, take delight in it. Pour water on this seedling and let it spread. It was on Your support that this tongue spoke at all. I was only feeding on the leavings of Your own words. Tuka says: this is the one thing I ask: give me again, and again, the gift of service.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is being deliberately small before the saints, calling his own poetry rough and stammering. He casts himself as a child taking liberties at their feet and asks them, as his mother and father, to be pleased with it and to nurture it like a tender plant. He gives them the credit for the speech itself: whatever he sang came from leaning on them and feeding on the scraps of their own words. His one request is not fame or release but more chances to serve. The poem turns humility into a prayer for continued devotion.

GATHA 2184

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false role

मराठी मूळ

पुरुषा हातीं कंकणचुडा । नवल दोडा वृत्त या ॥१॥
 पाहा कैसी विटंबणा । नारायणा देखिली ॥२॥
 जळो ऐसी िब्रदावळी । भाटवोळीपणाची ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पाहों डोळां । अवकळा नये हे ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A man wearing bangles and bridal ornaments on his wrists; what a strange and perverse sight. See what a humiliation this is, O Narayana.

Let such a display of hollow titles burn. Says Tuka, one cannot bear to witness such degradation with open eyes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A man with bridal bangles on his wrists. What a strange and twisted sight. Look at this disgrace, O Narayana. Let such a parade of hollow titles burn. Tuka says: the eyes cannot bear to watch such a falling-off.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is sickened by a man putting on what is not his, wearing bridal ornaments that do not belong to him, and he reads it as a sign of false display. He turns to Narayana and calls the sight a humiliation, then curses the empty titles and boasting it stands for. The harshness is aimed at the pattern of pretending to be what you are not, of dressing up in borrowed honors. The closing line says plainly that such self-degradation is painful even to look at. The mirror it holds up asks whether we are wearing roles and titles we have not earned.

GATHA 2185

Worldly Life

Worldly life, the tyranny of the belly

मराठी मूळ

वितीयेवढेंसैं पोट । केवढा बोभाट तयाचा ॥१॥
जळो याची विटंबना । भूक जना नाचवी ॥२॥
अभिमान सिरीं भार । जाले खर तृष्णेचे ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे नरका जावें । हा चि जीवें व्यापार ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The belly is only the span of a hand, yet what a great commotion it creates. Let this humiliation burn; hunger makes the whole world dance.

Pride sits heavy on the head; people have become donkeys carrying the load of craving. Says Tuka, one must go to hell; this is the only trade the jiva knows.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The belly is no bigger than a hand-span, yet look at the uproar it makes. Let this humiliation burn. Hunger sets the whole world dancing. Pride is a weight on the head; people have turned into donkeys hauling the load of craving. Tuka says: this trade, the only one the soul keeps practicing, leads straight to hell.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing how a small thing, the belly, drives a whole life. He marvels that something only a hand-span wide can throw a person into so much noise and shame, and says hunger alone makes the entire world dance to its tune. He turns the picture on pride and greed: people carry craving the way a donkey carries a load, bent under it. The harsh verdict is that a life spent only in this trade of feeding and grasping ends in hell. The point of self-examination is to see how much of our striving is just the belly and craving giving the orders.

GATHA 2186

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the heart of stone

मराठी मूळ

सेवटासी जरी आलें । तरी जालें आंधळें ॥1॥
 स्वहिताचा लेश नाही । दगडा कांहीं अंतरी ॥ध्रु॥
 काय परिसासवें भेटी । खापरखुंटी जालिया ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे अधम जन । अवगुणें चि वाढवी ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even at the end, when the final moment arrives, one remains blind. There is not a trace of self-interest within; the chitta is like a stone.

What good is meeting the philosopher's stone if one has already become a worthless potsherd? Says Tuka, a wicked person only grows in faults.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Even at the end, when the last moment comes, he stays blind. Not a trace of his own good is in him; inside, he is just a stone. What use is meeting the philosopher's stone once you have already become a broken shard? Tuka says: the low person only grows greater in his faults.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is warning against a heart that never softens, even at death. The blind man here is anyone who reaches the final hour with no care for his own true good, hardened inward like a stone. The image of the philosopher's stone is sharp: even the touch that turns iron to gold is wasted on a broken potsherd, on someone who has let himself become worthless to it. The closing line names the danger as a direction of growth: left unchecked, faults do not stay still, they increase. The verse points at the pattern of a closing, hardening life and urges the listener not to let his own heart turn to stone.

GATHA 2187

Autobiography

Autobiography, fearless correction

मराठी मूळ

प्रायश्चित्तें देतो तुका । जातो लोकां सकळां ॥1॥
 धरितील ते तरती मनीं । जाती घाणी वायां त्या ॥ध्रु॥
 निग्रहअनुग्रहाचे ठाय । देतो घाय पाहोनि ॥2॥
 तुका जाला नरसिंहि । भय नाहीं कृपेनें ॥3॥ ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Tuka offers atonement to all people. Those who hold it in their minds will be saved; the rest will go to waste.

He gives blows of correction and grace, seeing who needs which. Tuka has become fearless like Narasimha, by the power of grace.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka gives out the medicine of atonement. It goes to all people. Those who hold it in their minds will cross over. The rest will be wasted, their lives spilled out for nothing. He strikes where a blow is needed and shows grace where grace is needed, looking first to see which is called for. Tuka says: I have become like Narasimha. By grace, I have no fear.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing his own role as one who offers atonement freely to everyone. He says the offer is open to all, but only those who take it to heart will be saved; the rest let their lives run to waste. He claims the discernment to know when to correct sharply and when to be gentle, giving each according to need. The image of Narasimha, the fierce protective form, says he has become fearless, and he credits that fearlessness to grace rather than to himself. The poem owns a hard, dual ministry, blows and tenderness both, grounded in mercy.

GATHA 2188

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the inner filth

मराठी मूळ

दुर्जनाचें अंग अवघें चि सरळ । नकानचा कोथळ सांटवण ॥१॥
 खाय अमंगळ बोले अमंगळ । उठवी कपाळ संघष्टणें ॥२॥
 सर्पा मंत्र चाले धरावया हातीं । खळाची ते जाती निखळे चि ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कांहीं न साहे उपमा । आणीक अधमा वोखटणाची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The wicked person's body may appear smooth on the outside, but within is a sack of filth. He eats what is impure, speaks what is impure, and strikes his forehead in quarrels.

A serpent can be charmed by mantras and taken in hand, but the nature of a villain never straightens. Says Tuka, no comparison is adequate for one so wretched and vile.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The wicked man's body looks smooth all over, but inside he is a sack stuffed with filth. He eats what is foul and speaks what is foul, and bangs his own forehead in his quarrels. A snake can be charmed by a mantra and taken up in the hand, but the nature of a scoundrel never goes straight. Tuka says: no comparison is enough for one so vile; nothing is as low as such a low man.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is contrasting a smooth surface with a foul inside to expose a pattern of hidden corruption. The body of the wicked may look unblemished, but within it is a sack of filth, and that inner state shows itself in foul eating, foul speech, and a temper that lashes out even against itself in quarrels. The sharpest line says even a snake can be

tamed by mantra and held in the hand, but a scoundrel's crooked nature will not straighten by any means. He gives up on finding a fit comparison, saying nothing is as low as this. The verse asks the listener to look past appearances, and to examine whether the inside matches the smooth outside.

GATHA 2189

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, keep good company

मराठी मूळ

ऐका जी संतजन । सादर मन करुनि ॥१॥
 सकळांचें सार एक । कंटक ते तजावे ॥२॥
 विशेषता कांद्याहूनि । सेवित्या घाणी आगळी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ज्याची जोडी । ते परवडी बैसीजे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Listen, O holy ones, with attentive minds. The essence for all is one: avoid those who are like thorns.

Worse than an onion is the stench of one who consumes it. Says Tuka, sit in the company of those whose companionship is profitable.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Listen, holy ones, with attentive minds. The essence of it all is one: keep away from those who are like thorns. A man who eats an onion stinks worse than the onion itself. Tuka says: sit in the company of those whose company pays.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram addresses the assembly of devotees and reduces the whole teaching to a single rule about company. He tells them to avoid harmful people the way you avoid thorns, since their nearness wounds. The onion image sharpens the warning: the one who feeds on something foul carries its stench further than the thing itself, so the harm of bad company spreads through the one who keeps it. He closes by pointing the choice the other way, toward the company of the good, which alone is profitable. The point is not to despise people but to watch which company you let shape you.

GATHA 2190

The Saints

Surrender to the saints, the dust of their feet

मराठी मूळ

आज्ञा पाळुनियां असें एकसरें । तुमचीं उत्तरें संतांचीं हीं ॥१॥
 भागवूनि देह ठेवियेला पार्यीं । चरणावरि डोई येथुनं चि ॥२॥
 येणें जाणें हें तों उपाधीचे मूळ । पूजा ते सकळ अकर्तव्य ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे असें चरणींचा रज । पदीं च सहज जेथें तेथें ॥३॥ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I abide steadfastly by your commands, O saints. I have surrendered this body at Your feet, keeping my head upon Your feet from this place onward.

Coming and going is the root of worldly entanglement; all worship beyond this is unnecessary action. Says Tuka, I am the dust of Your feet, naturally present wherever I may be.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I keep your commands, holy ones, every one of them; your words are the saints' words to me. I have worn out this body at your feet, my head on your feet from here onward. Coming and going is the root of all entanglement; every worship beyond this is needless doing. Tuka says: I am the dust of your feet, present at your feet wherever I am.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes the saints' word his whole law and lays his body at their feet as the one act that matters. He calls coming and going, the restless movement of a self that keeps wandering, the very root of worldly bondage, and so dismisses elaborate worship as needless effort once surrender is complete. What he asks instead is the smallest place possible: to be the dust of their feet. By saying he is present at their feet wherever he is, he claims that this surrender is not tied to a spot but is carried in him everywhere. The spareness is the point; one resting place replaces all the doing.

GATHA 2191

Faith and Trust

Faith, settle and stay close

मराठी मूळ

न संडावा ठाव । ऐसा निश्चयाचा भाव ॥१॥
 आतां पुरे पुन्हा यात्रा । हें चि साखुनि सर्वत्रा ॥२॥
 संनिध चि सेवा । असों करुनियां देवा ॥३॥
 आज्ञोच्या पाळणें । असें तुका संतां ह्यणे ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One should not abandon one's place; such should be the resolve of faith. No more pilgrimages now; let everything be settled here.

Let me remain close, serving God always. Says Tuka to the saints, I abide by following Your command.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One should not leave one's place; let the resolve of faith be this firm. No more pilgrimages now; let everything be settled right here. Let me stay close, always serving God. Tuka says to the saints: I abide by keeping your command.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes a vow to stop moving. He sets down the wandering of pilgrimage and resolves that the place he is in is the place to stay, because faith does not need to go elsewhere to find what it seeks. The nearness he wants is to God, served without leaving; staying put is itself the service. He tells the saints that obeying their command is how he holds to this. The poem turns settledness into devotion: God is found by staying close, not by searching far.

GATHA 2192

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, lived under God's will

मराठी मूळ

उपाधीजें बीज । जळोनि राहिलें सहज ॥१॥
 आह्मां राहिली ते आतां । चाली देवाचिया सत्ता ॥२॥
 प्राधीन तें जिणें । केलें सत्ता नारायणें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे जाणें पाय । खुंटले आणीक उपाय ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The seed of worldly entanglement has been burned, and what remains is natural ease. The way we now walk is governed by God's will alone.

This dependent living has been ordained by Narayana's authority. Says Tuka, I know only His feet; all other remedies have ceased.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The seed of entanglement has burned up, and what is left is natural ease. The way I walk now runs by God's authority. This dependent life has been set in place by Narayana's power. Tuka says: I know only his feet; every other remedy has stopped.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a self that has stopped running its own life. The seed of worldly entanglement, the source from which trouble keeps growing, has been burned, so what remains is unforced ease. He says his every step is now governed by God, and he calls this a dependent life, not a failure but a settled condition ordained by Narayana. He has let go of all other methods and clings only to God's feet. The claim is radical: he no longer manages himself, and treats that loss of control as freedom rather than loss.

GATHA 2193

Social Criticism

Social criticism, devotion misplaced

मराठी मूळ

गोविंदावांचोनि वदे ज्याची वाणी । हगवण घाणी पिटपिट ते ॥१॥
 मस्तक सांडूनि सिसफूल गुडघां । चार तो अवघा बावळ्याचा ॥२॥
 अंगभूत ह्मूण पूजितो वाहाणा । ह्मणतां शाहाणा येइल कैसा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे वेश्या सांगे सवासिणी । इतर पूजनीं भाव तैसा ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The tongue that speaks without uttering Govinda's name produces nothing but foul and putrid noise. One who adorns his knees instead of his head with the sacred mark is wholly a fool.

He who worships his own shoes because they are part of his body, how can he ever become wise? Says Tuka, a courtesan lecturing a chaste wife on propriety; such is the devotion of those who worship lesser things.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The tongue that speaks without Govinda's name makes only foul, sputtering filth. The man who drops the mark from his head and puts it on his knees is wholly a fool. He worships his own shoe because it is part of his body; how will such a man ever turn out wise? Tuka says: a courtesan lecturing a faithful wife on virtue, that is the devotion of those who worship lesser things.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram attacks worship that has lost its center. Speech without God's name, he says, is not neutral but foul; the mark of devotion belongs on the head, and to set it on the knees is to honor what is low and call it holy. The man worshipping his own shoe because it belongs to his body names the absurdity of revering whatever is near at hand instead of God. The closing image is the sharpest: misplaced devotion teaching others about devotion is like a courtesan instructing a faithful wife on chastity. The target is the pattern of honoring lesser things and dressing it up as piety, a confusion worth examining in oneself.

GATHA 2194

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the incorrigible man

मराठी मूळ

कुतः याऐसें ज्याचें जिणें । संग कोणी न करीजे ॥१॥
 जाय तिकडे हाडहाडी । गोः हवाडी च सोडरीं ॥२॥
 अवगुणांचा त्याग नाही । खवळे पाहीं उपदेशें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कैची लवी । ठेंग्या केवीं अंकुर ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One whose life is like a dog's should not be kept in company. Wherever he goes there is only hostility; his only kin are those of the gutter.

His faults do not diminish; in fact, counsel only inflames them further. Says Tuka, how can a stump that is dead sprout any shoots?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One whose life is like a dog's: do not keep his company. Wherever he goes there is only snarling; his only kin are gutter folk. His faults never lessen; counsel only inflames him. Tuka says: where is the green shoot? How can a dead stump sprout?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns against the company of a man who cannot be corrected. He likens such a life to a dog's, met everywhere with hostility and at home only among the low. The hard observation is that good advice does not help this man; it angers him and makes his faults worse, so counsel is wasted on him. The closing image, a dead stump that cannot put out a shoot, names the condition: there is no living root for the teaching to take hold in. The point is discernment about who can receive correction, not contempt for the person, and a warning to examine whether one is hardening against counsel oneself.

GATHA 2195

Worldly Life

Worldly life, weary of bad company

मराठी मूळ

सर्वथा ही खोटा संग । उपजे भंग मनासी ॥१॥
 बहु रंगें भरलें जन । संपन्न चि अवगुणी ॥२॥
 सेविलिया निःकामबुद्धी । मदे शुद्धी सांडवी ॥३॥ ॥५॥
 त्रासोनियां बोले तुका । आतां लोकां दंडवत ॥३॥ ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The company of the wicked is wholly false; it only breeds disturbance in the mind. The world is full of colorful displays, abundantly endowed with faults.

Even serving the desireless, arrogance makes one abandon good sense. Says Tuka, weary of it all, I now bow to the world from a distance.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The company of the wicked is wholly false; it only breeds disturbance in the mind. People are full of bright displays, richly endowed with faults. Even when served with no selfish aim, pride makes a man lose his good sense. Worn out by it, Tuka says: now I bow to the world from a distance.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes how the company of bad people unsettles the mind and how the world's brightness only dresses up its faults. He notes that even disinterested service does not cure the proud, because arrogance itself drives out clear judgment, so the corruption is not easily reached from outside. Exhausted by all this, he chooses distance rather than confrontation: he bows to the world, but from afar. The gesture is both respect and withdrawal, a refusal to be drawn into the disturbance. The weariness is honest, and the response is to step back rather than to fight.

GATHA 2196

Renunciation

Renunciation, done with worldly ways

मराठी मूळ

उपचारासी वांज जालों । नका बोलों यावरी ॥१॥
 असेल तें असो तैसें । भेटीसरिसें नमन ॥२॥
 दुसऱ्यामध्ये कोण मिळे । छंद चाळे बहु मते ॥३॥
 एकाएकीं आतां तुका । लौकिका या बाहेरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have become barren to worldly remedies; do not speak of them further. Let things be as they are; I bow to whatever I meet.

Who can I find to truly join with, when there are so many whims and inclinations? Says Tuka, now I stand alone, beyond the pale of worldly convention.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have gone barren to worldly remedies; speak of them no more. Let things be as they are; I bow to whatever I meet. Whom can I truly join with, where there are so many whims and notions? Tuka says: now I stand alone, outside the world's conventions.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram declares himself finished with the world's fixes; he can no longer bear to hear them proposed. He accepts whatever comes and offers a bow to all alike, refusing to take sides among people's endless opinions and fancies. Finding no one to genuinely unite with in that confusion, he chooses solitude over false fellowship. He places himself outside worldly convention, not from pride but from exhaustion with its noise. The poem is a quiet stepping out: peace is found by ceasing to argue and standing alone.

GATHA 2197

Renunciation

Detachment, each to his own

मराठी मूळ

मी तें मी तूं तें तूं । कुंकुड हें लाडसी ॥१॥
 वचनासी पडो तुटी । पोटीचें पोटीं राखावें ॥२॥
 तेथील तेथें येथील येथें । वेगळ्या कुंथे कोण भारें ॥२॥
 याचें यास त्याचें त्यास । तुक्यानें कास घातली ॥३॥ ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am I, and you are you; let this foolish clucking cease. Let speech be cut short; what is in the belly should stay in the belly.

What belongs here stays here, what belongs there stays there; why should anyone groan under another's burden? Says Tuka, each to his own; I have girded myself for my own path.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am I, and you are you; let this silly clucking stop. Let talk be cut short; keep what is in the belly inside the belly. What belongs there stays there, what belongs here stays here; why should anyone groan under another's load? Tuka says: each man's own to himself; I have girded up for my own road.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram draws a firm line between himself and others and tells the endless chatter to cease. He counsels keeping one's inner matters within rather than spilling them in argument. The image of carrying another's burden names the trouble he refuses: taking on what is not yours leaves you groaning under a weight you were never meant to bear. Letting each thing and each person keep to their own place, he girds himself for his own path alone. This is detachment as boundary, not coldness: tend your own road and let others tend theirs.

GATHA 2198

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the crow that seeks filth

मराठी मूळ

लाडाच्या उत्तरीं वाढविती कलहे । हा तो अमंगळ जातिगुण ॥१॥
 तमाचे शरीरीं विटाळ चि वसे । विचाराचा नसे लेश तो ही ॥२॥
 कवतुकें घ्यावे लेंकराचे बोल । साहिलिया मोल ऐसें नाहीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे काय उपदेश खळा । न्हाउनि काउळा खतें धुंडी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Indulgent words only breed quarrels; this is the nature of tamasic people. In a body ruled by tamas, only impurity dwells; not even a trace of discrimination exists.

One may enjoy a child's innocent prattle, but enduring malice is another matter entirely. Says Tuka, what use is preaching to the wicked? A crow, even after bathing, goes searching through filth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Indulgent words only swell quarrels; this is the foul nature of tamasic people. A body ruled by tamas holds only defilement; not a trace of discernment lives there. A child's innocent prattle one can enjoy; but to endure malice is another thing entirely. Tuka says: what use is preaching to the wicked? A crow, even after a bath, goes looking through filth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the nature ruled by tamas, the heavy darkness in which quarrels grow and no power of discernment survives. He marks a sharp difference between a child's harmless babble, which can be indulged, and a grown person's malice, which should not be tolerated. The closing image lands the claim: preaching to such a person is useless, for he returns to his old foulness the way a crow, washed clean, still flies straight back to filth. The point is the durability of the pattern, not contempt for the soul; teaching cannot fix what keeps choosing its own corruption. It is a caution to examine where one's own nature keeps returning.

GATHA 2199

Prayers

Prayer, deliver me from desire

मराठी मूळ

आतां मज देवा । इचे हातींचें सोडवा ॥१॥
पाठी लागलीसे लांसी । इच्छा जिते जैसी तैसी ॥२॥
फेडा आतां पांग। अंगीं लपवुनी अंग ॥३॥
दुजें नेणें तुका । कांहीं तुझासी ठाउका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O God, deliver me now from the grip of desire. She pursues me relentlessly, this craving, alive and insistent as ever.

Fulfill Your vow now; hide me by covering me with Your own being. Says Tuka, I know nothing else; I am well known to You.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now, God, free me from her grip. This craving hounds me, alive and relentless as ever. Fulfill your promise now; hide me, covering me with your own self. Tuka says: I know no other; I am well known to you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays to be rescued from desire, which he pictures as a force that hunts him without rest. He cannot escape it by his own strength, so he asks God to make good on his promise and to hide him, covering him with God's own being as the only refuge. He admits he knows no other help, and reminds God that he himself is fully known, leaving nothing to hide and no one else to turn to. The prayer is bare and dependent: deliverance from craving is not something he can win but something he must be given.

GATHA 2200

Prayers

Prayer, trapped by lust and delusion

मराठी मूळ

बहु वाटे भये । माझे उडी घाला दये ॥१॥
 फांसा गुंतलों लिगाडीं । न चले बळ चरफडी ॥२॥
 कुंटित चि युक्ति । माझ्या जाल्या सर्व शक्ति ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । काममोहें केला गोवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Great fear grips me; O Compassionate One, take the leap for me. I am entangled in the snare of attachments; my strength fails and I thrash about helplessly.

All my faculties and powers have been rendered useless. Says Tuka, O God, lust and delusion have trapped me utterly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Great fear grips me; Compassionate One, leap to me. I am caught in the snare of attachments; my strength fails and I thrash about. All my faculties and powers have gone useless. Tuka says: God, lust and delusion have trapped me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram cries out in fear, like one caught in a snare whose struggling only tires him. He confesses that his own faculties and strength have stopped working; nothing in him can break the trap of attachment. Naming the cause plainly, he says lust and delusion have bound him, and only God's compassion, leaping to him, can free him. The honesty is the heart of it: he does not pretend to manage the fight himself but admits total helplessness and throws himself on grace. The prayer turns the failure of his own powers into the very reason to call on God.

GATHA 2201

Social Criticism

Social criticism, keep clear of the wicked

मराठी मूळ

विष्ठा भक्षी तया अमृत पारिखें । वोंगळ चि सखें वोंगळाचें ॥१॥
 नये पाहों कांहीं गोःहवाडीचा अंत । झणी ठाका संत दुर्जनापें ॥२॥
 भेंसळीच्या बीजा अमंगळ गुण । उपजवी सीण दुरुषणें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who eats filth finds nectar foreign to his taste; the vulgar are only friends with the vulgar. Do not go looking into the affairs of the gutter folk; saints, be cautious and stay far from the wicked.

The seed of bad company produces impure qualities and breeds suffering at the very sight.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one who eats filth thinks it is nectar. The vulgar are friends only with the vulgar. Do not go looking into the affairs of gutter folk. Saints, be careful; stay far from the wicked. The seed of bad company brings impure qualities. The very sight of it breeds suffering.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is warning the devout to choose their company well. He says a corrupt person mistakes filth for nectar and is at home only with others like himself, so there is no use trying to fix or fathom such people. The danger is not the wicked person alone but proximity to them: bad company is a seed that sprouts impure qualities in whoever stays near. He tells the saints to keep their distance, because even the sight of corruption breeds suffering and begins to work on you.

GATHA 2202

Social Criticism

Social criticism, wealth that serves nothing

मराठी मूळ

तुका ह्याने छी थूं जया घरीं धन । तेथें तें कारण कासयाचें ॥३॥ ॥१॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Says Tuka, shame on the house where such wealth resides; what purpose can anything serve there?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka says: shame on the house where such wealth lives. What purpose can anything serve there?

WHAT IT MEANS

This is Tukaram's closing line to the criticism that came before it. He calls down shame on a household whose riches sit beside corruption, because wealth in such hands serves no good end. The point is not that money is evil but that everything turns useless when the people holding it are rotten. He measures a house not by what it owns but by what its owning is good for.

GATHA 2203

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the heedless and karma

मराठी मूळ

चावळलें काय न करी बडबड । न ह्याने फिकें गोड भुकेलें तें ॥१॥
 उमजल्याविण न धरी सांभाळ । असो खळखळ जनाची हे ॥२॥
 गरज्या न कळे आपुलिया चाडा । करावी ते पीडा कोणा काई ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने भोग भोगितील भोगें । संचित तें जोगें आहे कोणा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A restless tongue babbles without ceasing; a starving person does not distinguish between stale and fresh. Without understanding, one cannot exercise restraint; let the clamor of the world be as it may.

The needy one does not recognize his own wants; why should he inflict his pain on others? Says Tuka, people will reap what their accumulated karma has sown; let each one's past deeds answer for them.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A restless tongue babbles without stopping. A starving person does not tell stale food from fresh. Without understanding, no one holds any restraint. Let the clamor of the world be as it is. The needy one does not see his own wants. Why should he force his pain onto others? Tuka says: people will reap what their gathered deeds have sown. Each one's past answers for them.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing how people without inner understanding behave, and where he leaves them. The hungry and the restless cannot discriminate or restrain themselves; lacking insight, they babble and grab, and the world stays noisy with this. He notices that the needy, blind to their own craving, end up inflicting their pain on others. Rather than condemn them, he hands the matter to karma: each person reaps what their accumulated deeds have planted, so their own past, not his judgment, will settle the account.

GATHA 2204

Renunciation

Renunciation, having vomited the world

मराठी मूळ

आपुला तो देह आह्मां उपेक्षीत । कोठें जाऊं हित सांगों कोणा ॥१॥
 कोण नाहीं दक्ष करितां संसार । आह्मीं हा विचार वमन केला ॥२॥
 नाहीं या धरीत जीवित्वाची चाड । कोठें करूं कोड आणिकांचें ॥३॥ ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे असों चिंतोनियां देवा । मी माझें हा हेवा सारूनियां ॥३॥ ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When I have forsaken care for my own body, where shall I go to speak of welfare, and to whom? Everyone is diligent enough in pursuing worldly life; I have vomited out that whole affair. I hold no attachment to this fleeting existence; how then can I attend to others' desires? Says Tuka, let me remain in contemplation of God, having settled the envy of 'me and mine.'

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have given up all care for my own body. Where would I go now to speak of welfare, and to whom? Everyone is busy enough chasing the worldly life. That whole affair I have vomited out. I hold no clinging to this passing life. How then could I tend to other people's wishes? Tuka says: let me stay in thought of God, having pushed aside the envy of 'me and mine.'

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is explaining why he no longer plays the game of worldly striving. Having let go of concern even for his own body, he has nowhere and no one with whom to discuss gain and advantage. He puts the renunciation starkly: he has vomited out the whole pursuit of worldly life that everyone else runs after. Without attachment to his fleeting existence and free of the grip of 'me and mine,' he has no business managing others' desires; he wants only to remain absorbed in God.

GATHA 2205

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, wages without service

मराठी मूळ

चाकरीवांचून । खाणें अनुचित वेतन ॥१॥
 धणी काढोनियां निजा । करील ये कामाची पूजा ॥२॥
 उचितावेगळें । अभिलाषें तोंड काळें ॥३॥
 सांगे तरी तुका । पाहा लाज नाहीं लोकां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

To eat wages without rendering service is improper. The master will dismiss such a one and honor the work that is truly done.

To desire beyond what is fitting only blackens one's face. Says Tuka, look, the people have no shame at all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To eat the wages without doing the work is not right. The master will turn out such a one and honor the work that is truly done. To want more than is fitting only blackens your face. Tuka says: look, people have no shame at all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets a plain standard of honesty using the figure of a servant and a master. Taking pay without rendering the service is wrong, and the master will dismiss the idler and reward only real work. Reaching for more than your due brings disgrace; that is what blackening the face means. He turns the small example into a verdict on the times: people grab beyond what they have earned and feel no shame doing it. The mirror is meant for the listener's own conscience.

GATHA 2206

Worldly Life

Worldly life, stay alert to the hour

मराठी मूळ

बरें सावधान । राहावें समय राखोन ॥१॥
 नाहीं सारखिया वेळा । अवघ्या पावतां अवकळा ॥२॥
 लाभ अथवा हानी । थोड्यामध्यें च भोवनी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे राखा । आपणा नाहीं तोंचि वाखा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Remain well alert, watching for the right moment. All times are not equal; misfortune can overtake anyone.
 Gain or loss can turn in the briefest span. Says Tuka, guard yourself; the one who fails to do so is vulnerable.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Stay well alert. Keep watch on the right moment. All times are not the same. Misfortune can overtake anyone. Gain or loss can turn in the briefest span. Tuka says: guard yourself. The one who does not is the one left exposed.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is counseling watchfulness in the face of life's turning. Times are not all alike; fortune and ruin can switch places in an instant, and no one is exempt. So he urges steady alertness, reading the hour and keeping watch rather than drifting. The one who fails to guard himself is precisely the one left vulnerable when the moment turns. The verse is practical caution, but underneath it lies the reminder that nothing here is secure.

GATHA 2207

Confession and Sin

Confession, the restless monkey

मराठी मूळ

काय करूं जी दातारा । कांहीं न पुरे संसारा ॥१॥
 जाली माकडाची परि । येतों तळा जातों वरी ॥२॥
 घालीं भलते ठायीं हात । होती शिव्या बैस लात ॥३॥
 आदि अंतीं तुका । सांगे न कळे झाला चुका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O generous Lord, what shall I do? Nothing ever suffices for this worldly life. I have become like a monkey, going up and down ceaselessly.

I put my hand into every affair and receive abuse and kicks in return. Says Tuka, from beginning to end I keep failing, and I cannot even tell where my mistakes lie.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O generous Lord, what shall I do? Nothing is ever enough for this worldly life. I have become like a monkey, going down and climbing up again and again. I put my hand into every affair and get curses and kicks in return. Tuka says: from beginning to end I keep failing, and I cannot even tell where my mistakes lie.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is confessing his own helplessness in worldly life and laying it before God. He likens himself to a monkey that never settles, scrambling up and down, never satisfied no matter what he gains. Meddling in every affair, he reaps only abuse and blows. The sharpest stroke is the last: he keeps failing from start to finish and cannot even locate his own mistakes. The confession turns toward the Lord because Tukaram knows that the way out of this restless, blind floundering is not his own cleverness but grace.

GATHA 2208

Worldly Life

Worldly life, Maya the puppeteer

मराठी मूळ

धर्म तो न कळे । काय झांकितील डोळे ॥१॥
 जीव भ्रमले या कामें । कैसीं कळों येती वर्मे ॥२॥
 विषयांचा माज । कांहीं धरुं नेदी लाज ॥३॥ ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे लांसी । माया नाचविते कैसी ॥३॥ ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Dharma is not understood; people just shut their eyes. Jivas are bewildered by lust; how can they perceive any truth? The intoxication of sense pleasures will not let one hold on to any sense of shame.

Says Tuka, see how Maya makes everyone dance like a puppet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Dharma is not understood. People simply shut their eyes. Living beings are bewildered by lust. How can they perceive any truth? The intoxication of the senses will not let them hold on to any shame. Tuka says: see how Maya makes everyone dance like a puppet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming the condition that keeps people blind to right living. They do not grasp dharma; they close their eyes to it, dazed by craving so that no truth can reach them. Drunk on sense pleasure, they lose even the shame that might check them. He gives the whole spectacle one image: Maya, the world's deluding power, holds the strings and makes everyone dance like puppets. The point is not contempt for any one person but recognition of the force that moves us all when we stop looking.

GATHA 2209

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the slanderer's trade

मराठी मूळ

दुर्जनाची जोडी । सज्जनाचे खेंटर तोडी ॥१॥
 पाहे निमित्त तें उणें । धांवे छळावया सुनें ॥२॥
 न ह्मणे रामराम । मनें वाचे हें चि काम ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे भागा । आली निंदा करी मागा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The company of the wicked breaks the bonds of the good. The villain looks for the smallest flaw and rushes to persecute with cunning.

He never utters Rama's name; his sole occupation, in word and thought, is malice. Says Tuka, slander has come as his inheritance, and he pursues it relentlessly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The company of the wicked breaks the bonds among the good. The villain looks for the smallest fault and runs to harass with cunning, like a dog set loose. He never says Rama, Rama. In thought and word his only work is malice. Tuka says: slander has come to him as his inheritance, and he chases after it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is drawing the portrait of the habitual slanderer and the harm he does. Such a person pries apart the ties between good people, hunting for the tiniest flaw and rushing in to persecute with a dog's relentlessness. His mouth never holds the name of Rama; malice in thought and speech is his entire occupation. Calling slander his inheritance, Tukaram points at how deeply the pattern has become second nature. The warning, set beside the previous verses, is again to know this trade and keep away from it, and to check it in oneself.

GATHA 2210

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the hollow pretender

मराठी मूळ

शादीचें तें सोंग । संपादितां जरा वेंग ॥१॥
 पाहा कैसी विटंबना । मूर्खा अभाग्याची जना ॥२॥
 दिसतें तें लोपी । झिंज्या बोडुनियां पापी ॥३॥
 सिंदळी त्या सती । तुका ह्मणे थुंका घेती ॥३॥ ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Sanity is just a show; one struggles to keep up appearances. See what a disgrace befalls the foolish and the unfortunate.

What is visible, the wrongdoer tries to conceal, shaving off what little dignity remains. Says Tuka, the unchaste claim to be chaste, yet they lick the spit of their own deception.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sanity is only a show; one strains to keep up the appearance. See what disgrace falls on the foolish and the luckless. What can be seen, the wrongdoer tries to hide, shaving away what little dignity is left. Tuka says: the unchaste call themselves chaste, and so they lick up their own spit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing the gap between a person's display and the truth underneath. Keeping up a respectable front is exhausting and ends in disgrace for the foolish and unfortunate, because what is plainly visible cannot really be hidden, and the effort to conceal it strips off the last of one's dignity. The final image is deliberately ugly: those who are unchaste yet claim to be chaste end up swallowing their own spit, that is, eating their own falsehood. The verse aims at the pattern of pretending to be what one is not, and invites honest self-examination rather than disguise.

GATHA 2211

Social Criticism

Social criticism, false renunciation

मराठी मूळ

भक्ता ह्मणऊनि वंचावें जीवें । तेणें शेण खावें काशासाठीं ॥१॥
नासिले अडबंद कौपीन ते माळा । अडचण राउळामाजी केली ॥२॥
अंगीकारिले सेवे अंतराय । तया जाला न्याय खापराचा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

To cheat others in the name of devotion, why should one then eat filth for that? They have spoiled the signs of renunciation, the loincloth and the rosary, and created obstruction in the very temple. Those who have accepted service but placed obstacles in it receive judgment fit for a broken pot.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To cheat people in the name of devotion: why then eat filth for it? They have ruined the marks of renunciation, the loincloth and the rosary, and made trouble inside the very temple. Those who took up service but blocked it get the judgment fit for a broken pot.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is attacking the abuse of religious appearance. To use the show of devotion to swindle others is to sink to eating filth, and for what gain. Such people disgrace the very signs of a renunciant, the loincloth and the rosary, and turn the temple itself, where service should be offered, into a place of obstruction. Those who accepted sacred service and then sabotaged it earn, he says, the worth of a broken pot, fit only to be cast aside. The charge is against the hypocrisy, not against renunciation or the temple.

GATHA 2212

Social Criticism

Social criticism, filth cannot last

मराठी मूळ

तुका ह्मणे कोठें तगों येती घाणीं । आहाच ही मनीं अधीरता ॥३॥ ॥१॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Says Tuka, how long can such filth endure? There is only impatience and restlessness within.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka says: how long can such filth endure? Inside there is only impatience and restlessness.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is Tukaram's closing stroke on the false and corrupt he has been describing. He asks how long such filth can possibly hold up, the answer being that it cannot. Beneath the pretender's surface there is no peace, only impatience and restlessness churning within. The point is that corruption carries its own undoing: what is hollow inside cannot stand for long.

GATHA 2213

Social Criticism

Social criticism, shun the shameless

मराठी मूळ

गयाळाचें काम हिताचा आवारा । लाज फजितखोरा असत नाहीं ॥१॥
 चित्ता न मिळे तें डोळां सलो जेतें । असावें परतें जवळूनि ॥२॥
 न करावा संग न बोलावी मात । सावधान चित्त नाहीं त्यासी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे दुःख देतील माकडें । घालिती सांकडें उफराटें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The work of a lazy person undermines what is beneficial. The shameless one has no sense of embarrassment.

What does not agree with the chitta is painful to the eyes; one should keep a distance from such people. Do not keep their company, do not engage in conversation with them; they have no alertness of mind.

Says Tuka, monkeys will only bring you grief, creating obstacles at every turn.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The work of a lazy person ruins what is good. The shameless one feels no embarrassment. What does not agree with the heart hurts the eyes; keep such people at a distance. Do not keep their company. Do not talk with them. They have no watchfulness of mind. Tuka says: monkeys will only bring you grief; they twist things and make trouble at every turn.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is warning about the company we keep. He says a careless, shameless person spoils whatever is good and feels nothing about it, and being near such people grates on the heart the way grit grates on the eye. His counsel is plain: keep your distance, do not befriend them, do not even talk with them, because their minds are not awake and they cannot help dragging you down. The comparison to monkeys names the pattern, the restless mischief that twists everything backward, and the verse turns the listener toward guarding the steadiness of their own mind.

GATHA 2214

Renunciation

Renunciation, solitude over company

मराठी मूळ

बहु बरें एकाएकीं । संग चुकी करावा ॥१॥
 ऐसें बरें जालें ठावें । अनुभवं आपुल्या ॥२॥
 सांगावें तें काम मना । सलगी जना नेदावी ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे निघे अगी । दुजे संगीं आतळतां ॥३॥ ॥२॥
 बोलिले कीं कवित्व बुडवणें तेव्हां कवित्व बुडवून पांच दिवस होते ॥
 लोकांनीं फार पीडा केली कीं संसारही नाही व परमार्थही बुडविला
 आणीक कोणी असतें तें जीव देतें मग निद्रा केली ते अभंग ॥ २० ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

It is far better to be alone; one should avoid company altogether. This has become clear through my own experience.

Speak to your own mind what needs to be done, and do not give familiarity to the world. Says Tuka, fire ignites when it touches another; contact with others is perilous.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It is far better to be alone. Avoid company altogether. I know this is so from my own experience. Tell your own mind what must be done; do not give the world your familiarity. Tuka says: fire breaks out when it touches another. Contact with others is dangerous.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praising solitude and naming why. From his own experience he has found it better to keep apart, to speak the needed counsel to his own mind rather than open himself easily to the crowd. The image of fire catching when it touches something else shows the danger he means: closeness to the wrong company kindles what should stay quiet. The verse points the listener toward inward self-counsel and a guarded, watchful distance from the world.

GATHA 2215

Longing and Separation

Longing, the haunted house of devotion

मराठी मूळ

भूतबाधा आह्मां घरीं । हें तों आश्चर्य गा हरी ॥१॥
 जाला भक्तीचा कळस । आले वस्तीस दोष ॥२॥
 जागरणाचें फळ । दिली जोडोनि तळमळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । आहाच कळों आली सेवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

That evil spirits should haunt our home is truly astonishing, O Hari. Devotion has reached its pinnacle, yet faults have come to dwell with us.

The fruit of our vigil has been nothing but anguish and torment. Says Tuka, O God, such is the service we have come to know.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Evil spirits haunt our home. This is a strange thing, O Hari. Devotion has reached its highest point, yet faults have come to live with us. The fruit of our long vigil is only anguish, given to us folded together. Tuka says: O God, the service we have come to know is hollow.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is crying out in bewilderment to Hari. He has carried devotion to its peak and kept long vigils, yet what has come to dwell with him is not peace but torment, faults and a haunting that should have no place near such bhakti. He says this is astonishing, and the strangeness itself is the complaint: the reward of his service feels empty and the fruit handed back to him is anguish. The verse holds the ache of the devotee who has given everything and finds God still withheld.

GATHA 2216

Longing and Separation

Longing, union or annihilation

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं जों वेचलों जिवाचिया त्यागें । तोंवरी वाउगें काय बोलों ॥१॥
 जाणिवलें आतां करीं ये उदेश । जोडी किंवा नाश तुमची जीवें ॥२॥
 ठायींचे चि आलें होतें ऐसें मना । जावें ऐसें वना दृढ जालें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मग वेचीन उत्तरें । उद्धेसिलें खरें जाल्यावरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Until I have truly spent myself in the sacrifice of my life, why speak empty words? Now, with full awareness, I make this resolve: either union with You or annihilation in the attempt. This intention had been in my mind from the very beginning; the determination to go to the forest has grown firm.

Says Tuka, then I shall spend my words, once what is true has been proven.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Until I have truly spent myself, giving up my very life, why should I speak empty words? Now, with full awareness, I make my resolve: either union with You, or my ruin in the attempt. This was in my mind from the very start. The will to go to the forest has grown firm. Tuka says: then I shall spend my words, once what is true has been proven.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets a final term to his seeking. He refuses to keep talking until he has staked his whole life on it, and he names the only two outcomes he will accept: union with God or destruction in the trying. He says this was his intention from the beginning, and now the resolve to withdraw to the forest has hardened into something settled. The verse lands the stakes of bhakti at their sharpest, where words are worthless until the life behind them has been laid down, and Tukaram promises to speak again only after the truth is proven.

GATHA 2217

Confession and Sin

Confession, the day of reckoning

मराठी मूळ

करुं कवि काय आतां नाही लाज । मज भक्तराज हांसतील ॥१॥
 आतां आला एका निवाडणाचा दिस । सत्याविण रस विरसला ॥२॥
 अनुभवाविण कोण करी पाप । रिते चि संकल्प लाजलावे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां न धरवे धीर । नव्हे जीव िस्थर माझा मज ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What poetry can I compose now? I have lost all shame. The great devotees will laugh at me.

The day of reckoning has arrived; without truth, all flavor has turned sour. Who commits sin without experience? Empty resolutions should be ashamed of themselves.

Says Tuka, I can no longer hold my patience; my own jiva is not steady within me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What poetry can I make now? I have no shame left. The great devotees will laugh at me. The day of reckoning has come; without truth, all the sweetness has gone flat. Who commits sin without having tasted it? Empty resolutions should be ashamed of themselves. Tuka says: I can hold my patience no longer; my own life is not steady within me.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is Tukaram turning the knife on himself. He doubts his own verses and fears the laughter of true devotees, because a day of reckoning has arrived where anything not grounded in truth has lost its savor. He confesses that hollow resolutions, vows made without real experience behind them, deserve shame, and he counts himself among those exposed. The verse points inward, at the gap between what one declares and what one has actually lived, and ends in raw unsteadiness: his patience is spent and his own life will not sit still within him.

GATHA 2218

Longing and Separation

Longing, no more empty winnowing

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं आइकत तुम्ही माझे बोल । कासया हें फोल उपणूं भूस ॥१॥
 येसी तें करीन बैसलिया ठाया । तूं चि बुझावया जवळी देवा ॥२॥
 करावे ते केले सकळ उपाय । आतां पाहों काय अझुनि वास ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आला आज्ञोसी सेवट । होऊनियां नीट पायां पडों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You do not hear my words. Why then should I thresh this empty chaff? Whatever comes to pass, I shall remain seated here; You Yourself must come close to console me, O God.

I have tried every remedy there was to try. How much longer should I wait? Says Tuka, the end of my endurance has come. Let me simply fall at Your feet with a straightforward chitta.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You do not hear my words. Why should I keep winnowing this empty chaff? Whatever happens, I will stay seated right here; You Yourself must come close to console me, O God. I have tried every remedy there was. How much longer should I keep watching for You? Tuka says: the end of my endurance has come. Let me just stand up straight and fall at Your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is done with effort and turns it into a final demand of love. He compares his pleading to winnowing empty husks, useless if God will not listen, so he refuses to do more and simply sits, insisting that God must be the one to draw near and comfort him. He has exhausted every remedy and will not keep straining his eyes in waiting. The verse lands on surrender as the last move: when his own endurance is finished, all that is left is to rise and fall plainly at the feet of God.

GATHA 2219

Longing and Separation

Longing, none can match You

मराठी मूळ

नव्हे तुझां सरी । येवढें कारण मुरारी ॥१॥
 मग जैसा तैसा काळ । दाट सारावा पातळ ॥२॥
 स्वामीचें तें सांडें । पुत्र होतां काळतोंडें ॥३॥
 शब्दा नाहीं रुची । मग कोठें तुका वेची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

No one can match You, O Murari; that much is certain. Then, whatever time remains, dense or thin, must simply be endured.

Even the master's legacy is abandoned when the son turns wicked. When words lose their savor, Says Tuka, where should I spend them?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

No one is your equal, O Murari; that much is sure. So whatever time is left, thick or thin, must just be pushed through. Even the master's inheritance is thrown away when the son turns wicked. Tuka says: when words lose their taste, where should I spend them?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram acknowledges God's supremacy and yet voices a tired resignation. He grants that none can match Murari, but the time still left to him, whether dense or thin, now feels like something merely to be endured. The image of a wicked son squandering his father's legacy names the fear that what God has given is being wasted. The verse ends on the loss of savor: when even words have gone flat, the poet no longer knows where to pour them, and the longing shows through the weariness.

GATHA 2220

Autobiography

Autobiography, the true vow ripens

मराठी मूळ

केल्यापुरती आळी । कांहीं होते टाळाटाळी ॥१॥
 सत्यसंकल्पाचें फळ । होतां न दिसे चि बळ ॥२॥
 दळणांच्या ओव्या । रित्या खरें मापें घ्याव्या ॥३॥
 जातीं उखळें चाटूं । तुका ह्मणे राज्य घाटूं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The excuses served their purpose for a while; there was some delay and avoidance. But when the fruit of a true resolution is ready, no force can hold it back.

The grinding songs of women at the mill are empty; the true measure must be taken honestly. Says Tuka, even while licking the mortar, we scheme for a kingdom.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The excuses worked for a while; there was some putting off and dodging. But when the fruit of a true resolution is ready, no force can hold it back. The grinding songs sung at the mill are empty; let the true measure be taken honestly. Tuka says: even while licking the mortar, we scheme for a kingdom.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks back at his own delays and then at the moment they ended. The excuses and stalling served for a time, but a vow that is truly sincere ripens into a fruit that nothing can stop. He contrasts hollow, habitual piety, like songs hummed at the grinding mill, with an honest reckoning of what is real. The closing image of scheming for a kingdom while still scraping the empty mortar names the absurdity he sees in himself and others: grand spiritual ambition voiced from a place of nothing, until the resolve becomes true.

GATHA 2221

Autobiography

Autobiography, the vow to lay down the pen

मराठी मूळ

आतां नेम जाला । या च कळसीं विठ्ठला ॥१॥
 हातीं न धरीं लेखणी । काय भुसकट ते वाणी ॥२॥
 जाणें तेणें काळ । उरला सारीन सकळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे घाटी । चाटू कोरडा शेवटीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now the vow is made, O Vitthal, and this is its culmination. I will not take up the pen again; what use is this chaff of speech? However the remaining time goes, I shall pass it all in that manner.

Says Tuka, at the very end, one is left licking a dry ladle.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now the vow is made, O Vitthal, and this is where it comes to its peak. I will not pick up the pen again. What use is this chaff of speech? However the time that is left goes, I will pass all of it that way. Tuka says: at the very end, one is left licking a dry ladle.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram declares a vow to Vitthal: to set down his pen and write no more, calling his own speech empty chaff. Whatever days remain to him, he intends to spend them in that silence rather than in words he no longer trusts. The final image, of being left licking a dry ladle at the end, names the emptiness he fears: effort that yields nothing to taste. The verse marks a turning point where the poet renounces even his poetry, waiting for what is real.

GATHA 2222

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, asking God to be pleased

मराठी मूळ

पावावे संतोष । तुझीं यासाठीं सायास ॥१॥
 करीं आवडी वचनें । पालटूनि क्षणक्षणें ॥२॥
 द्यावें अभयदान । भुमीन पाडावें वचन ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने परस्परें । कांहीं वाढवीं उत्तरें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You should be pleased; for this purpose we make our efforts. I compose words of devotion, changing them moment by moment.

Grant the gift of fearlessness; do not let Your word fall to the ground. Says Tuka, let us increase our exchange of words, back and forth, together.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You should be pleased; it is for this that we take such pains. I make words of love, changing them moment by moment. Grant the gift of fearlessness; do not let Your word fall to the ground. Tuka says: between us, let us keep increasing the exchange of words, back and forth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram frames his poetry as labor offered to delight God. He reshapes his words of devotion again and again, hoping only that Vitthal will be pleased by them. His request is for the gift of fearlessness, abhaya, and he asks God not to let His own promise drop unfulfilled to the ground. The verse pictures bhakti as a living conversation, words passed back and forth between devotee and God, and asks that this exchange keep growing rather than fall silent.

GATHA 2223

Longing and Separation

Longing, the loving complaint

मराठी मूळ

बोलतां वचन असा पाठमोरे । मज भाव बरे कळों आले ॥१॥
 मागतिलें नये अरुचीनें हातां । नाहीं वरी सत्ता आदराची ॥२॥
 समाधानासाठीं लाविलासे कान । चोरलें तें मन दिसतसां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने आह्मां तुमचे चि फंद । वरदळ छंद कळों येती ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When I speak, You turn away. I have come to understand Your disposition well.

What is asked for does not come willingly; there is no authority that can compel Your love. You lend Your ear for the sake of pacifying me, but I can see that Your mind has been stolen away elsewhere.

Says Tuka, we understand Your ways; Your superficial whims are transparent to us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When I speak, You turn Your back. I have come to understand Your nature well. What I ask for does not come willingly; there is no power that can force Your love. You lend an ear just to quiet me, but I can see that Your mind has been stolen away somewhere else. Tuka says: we know Your games; Your surface whims are easy for us to read.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a lover's complaint addressed straight to God. Tukaram says that when he speaks, God turns away, and he claims to have read God's disposition: love cannot be compelled, and what he begs for is given grudgingly if at all. He sees through the half-attention, the ear lent only to pacify him while the heart is elsewhere. The teasing, intimate tone is the point; the verse names the soul's frustration at a God who withholds, while insisting that the devotee knows these games well enough to see past the surface.

GATHA 2224

Longing and Separation

Longing, why keep the stall open

मराठी मूळ

काशासाठीं बैसों करुनियां हाट । वाउगा बोभाट डांगोरा हा ॥१॥
काय आलें एका जिवाच्या उद्धारें । पावशी उच्चारें काय हो तें ॥२॥
नेदी पट परी अन्नं तों न मरी । आपुलिये थोरीसाठीं राजा ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे आतां अद्देरिलें तरी । मग कोण करी दुकान हा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why should I sit and set up this shop, making all this empty proclamation and fanfare? What does the salvation of one soul accomplish? Will You be reached merely by uttering words? A king may not give cloth, but he at least does not let anyone starve, for the sake of his own dignity. Says Tuka, if You now reject us, who will keep this stall open?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why should I sit here keeping a shop, making this empty noise and beating the drum? What does saving one soul gain You? Will You be reached just by speaking Your name aloud? A king may give no cloth, but at least he lets no one starve, for the sake of his own dignity. Tuka says: if You reject us now, then who will keep this stall open?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram challenges God with a merchant's image: his preaching and chanting are a shop, a noisy stall set up in the marketplace, and he asks what the point is if God stays distant. He presses the stakes by appealing to God's own honor: even a king who gives no gifts will not let his people starve, because their ruin would shame him. The

implied argument is that God's reputation rests on caring for those who call on Him. The closing line lands the warning: if God rejects His devotees, the whole enterprise of devotion, the open stall, collapses, and the loss is God's own.

GATHA 2225

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, fear of losing the Name

मराठी मूळ

माझा मज नाही । आला उबेग तो कांहीं ॥१॥
 तुमच्या नामाची जतन । नव्हता थोर वाटे सीण ॥२॥
 न पडावी निंदा । कानीं स्वामींची गोविंदा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे लाज । आह्मां स्वामीचें तें काज ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have no weariness of my own; whatever discomfort comes is nothing. But without the protection of Your Name, I feel great pain.

May no slander of the Lord ever reach my ears, O Govinda. Says Tuka, our only concern is the honor and work of our Master.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am not my own. Whatever discomfort comes to me is nothing. But if Your Name is not kept safe within me, that is great pain. Let no slander of my Lord ever fall on my ears, Govinda. Tuka says: the one care we have is the honor and the work of our Master.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming the only thing he is afraid of. His own troubles, sickness, hardship, count for nothing; he can bear them without complaint. The single unbearable loss would be to let go of God's Name, or to hear it dishonored. So he draws his whole concern down to one point: not his comfort, not his fate, but the honor of the Lord he serves. Everything personal has dropped away from him; what remains is care for his Master alone.

GATHA 2226

Renunciation

Renunciation, the body given away

मराठी मूळ

कांहीं मागणें हें आह्मां अनुचित । वडिलांची रीत जाणतसों ॥१॥
 देह तुच्छ जालें सकळ उपाधी । सेवेपार्शीं बुद्ध राहिलीसे ॥२॥
 शब्द तो उपाधि अचळ निश्चय । अनुभव हो काय नाही अंगीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देह फांकिला विभागीं । उपकार अंगीं उरविला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

It is improper for us to beg; we know the ways of our ancestors. The body and all its worldly concerns have become worthless; my mind rests only in service.

Words are worldly distractions, but the inner resolve is unshakeable. Is there not experience in this very being? Says Tuka, this body has been divided and distributed, and only gratitude has been kept within.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It is not right for us to beg for anything. We know the way our elders kept. The body and all its tangles have become worthless to me. My mind rests only at Your service. Words are just one more tangle; the inner resolve does not move. Is there no living proof of this in me? Tuka says: this body has been divided and given out in shares, and only gratitude has been kept back within me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is refusing the posture of a beggar before God. The saints before him did not whine for favors, and he holds to their way. He has stopped valuing the body and its worldly concerns, and has settled his mind wholly into service. He warns that talk itself is just another distraction; what counts is the unmoving resolve and the lived experience underneath the words. The closing image is stark: he has parceled out his very body and given it away, keeping for himself nothing but gratitude.

GATHA 2227

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the dealings run backward

मराठी मूळ

मागितल्यास कर पसरी । पळतां भरी वाखती ॥१॥
 काय आह्मी नेणों वर्म । केला श्रम नेणतां ॥२॥
 बोलतां बरें येतां रागा । कठीण लागा मार्गेंमार्गें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे येथें बोली । असे चाली उफराटी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When asked, He extends His hand in giving, yet He flees when You pursue Him. Do I not know this secret? Effort was wasted due to ignorance.

He responds well to sweet talk but grows stern when you get demanding. Says Tuka, here the dealings run in reverse.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When you ask Him, He opens His hand and gives. When you chase Him, He runs. Do I not know this secret? My effort was wasted because I did not understand it. He answers sweet talk kindly, and turns hard when you press and demand. Tuka says: here the way of dealing runs in reverse.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram has worked out how God behaves, the hard way. Ask, and the hand opens; pursue and grab, and He slips away. Speak softly and He responds; turn demanding and He goes cold. He admits his own labor was thrown away because he did not see this sooner. The point is that the rules with God are the opposite of worldly bargaining: grasping loses, and the open, unhurried hand receives.

GATHA 2228

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, peace already at hand

मराठी मूळ

असो तुझें तुजपाशीं । आह्मां त्यासी काय चाड ॥१॥
 निरोधें कां कोडूं मन । समाधान असोनी ॥२॥
 करावा तो उरे आट । खटपट वाढतसे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे येउन रागा । कां मी भागा मुकेन ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let what is Yours remain with You. What need do we have of it? Why should we imprison the mind with resistance when peace is already at hand? Every effort that is made only increases complication and strife.

Says Tuka, if I give in to anger, I shall lose my rightful share.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let what is Yours stay with You. What need do we have of it? Why should I lock up the mind by force, when peace is already here? Whatever I set out to do only leaves a residue; the struggle keeps growing. Tuka says: if I give in to anger, why should I lose my own share?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is letting go of the things he might have claimed from God, and of the effort to control his own mind. He sees that forcing the mind shut is pointless when calm is already present. Striving only leaves leftover trouble and multiplies the strife. The closing line is a quiet self-warning: if he lets resentment rise, he will only forfeit the peace that is rightfully his. So surrender here is not defeat; it is refusing to trade away a share he already holds.

GATHA 2229

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the natural flow

मराठी मूळ

आहे तें चि पुढें पाहों । बरे आहों येथें चि ॥१॥
 काय वाढवूनि काम । उगा च श्रम तृष्णेचा ॥२॥
 स्थिरावतां ओघीं बरें । चाली पुरें पडेना ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे विळतां मन । आह्मां क्षण न लगे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let us look at what is already before us; we are well enough right here. Why increase effort for nothing, adding only the toil of craving? When one settles into the natural flow, one finds that it never runs out.

Says Tuka, when the mind turns inward, it takes us not even a moment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let me look at what is already in front of me. I am well enough right here. Why pile on more work, taking on the toil of craving for nothing? When I settle into the natural flow, it is good, and the way ahead never runs short. Tuka says: when the mind turns inward, it takes us no time at all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is choosing what is present over what could be chased. He sees no reason to add effort and craving when he is already well where he stands. Settling into the natural current, instead of fighting it, he finds the road never runs out. The final line names how near the goal is: once the mind turns inward, the arrival takes no time. Surrender is not striving harder; it is stopping the manufacture of want.

GATHA 2230

Longing and Separation

Longing, am I not Yours

मराठी मूळ

सांगा दास नव्हे तुमचा मी कैसा । ऐसें पंढरीशा विचारुनि ॥१॥
कोणासाठीं केली प्रपंचाची होळी । या पायां वेगळी मायबापा ॥२॥
नसेल तो द्यावा सत्यत्वासी धीर । नये भाजूं हीर उफराटे ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे आह्मां आहिक्य परत्रीं । नाहीं कुळगोत्रीं दुजे कांहीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Tell me, am I not Your servant? Consider this well, O Lord of Pandhari. For whose sake have I set fire to worldly life, apart from these feet of Yours, O Mother and Father? If truth is wavering, give it courage; do not roast the diamond in the wrong fire.

Says Tuka, in this world and the next, we have nothing and no one, no lineage or clan, other than You.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tell me, how am I not Your servant? Think it over, Lord of Pandhari. For whose sake did I burn down my worldly life, if not for these feet of Yours, my Mother and Father? If the truth in me is wavering, give it courage; do not roast the diamond in the wrong fire. Tuka says: in this world and the next we have no one, no clan or kin, but only You.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pressing his claim on God and asking to be acknowledged. He has set fire to ordinary worldly life, and he insists he did it for one reason alone: the feet of the Lord of Pandhari. So he asks God to steady his faith when it shakes, and not to test true devotion as if it were false. The diamond image warns against ruining what is genuine

by treating it wrongly. He ends by staking everything: he has no lineage, no other refuge, in this life or the next, except God.

GATHA 2231

Prayers

Prayer, the child on the mother

मराठी मूळ

अनन्यासी ठाव एक सर्वकार्जे । एकाविण दुजें नेणे चित्त ॥१॥
 न पुरतां आळी देशधडी व्हावें । हें काय बरवें दिसतसे ॥२॥
 लेंकराचा भार माउलीचे शिरीं । निढळ तें दुरी धरिलिया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे किती घातली लांबणी । समर्थ होउनि केवढासाटीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The devoted one has a single refuge for all purposes; the mind knows nothing apart from the One. If the plea is not fulfilled, must one be banished and scattered? How does that look? A child's burden rests on the mother's head; how can it be pushed away? Says Tuka, how long will You delay? You are almighty; for what great matter do You postpone?

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one who is wholly Yours has a single refuge for everything. The mind knows nothing but the One. If my plea goes unmet, must I be cast out and scattered? Does that look right? A child's weight rests on the mother's head; how can she push it away? Tuka says: how long will You keep stretching it out? You are almighty; for what great matter do You delay?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as one who has given himself entirely to God and has no other recourse. He protests that to leave his plea unanswered would be to throw out a soul who has nowhere else to go. His central image is the helpless child whose burden naturally falls on the mother, and a mother cannot simply shove it off. He then challenges God's delay directly: an almighty Lord has no reason to postpone, so why the long wait? The longing here turns into an almost familiar complaint, the trust of a child who knows it cannot be abandoned.

GATHA 2232

Confession and Sin

Confession, shameless calling out

मराठी मूळ

स्तुती तरि करुं काय कोणापासीं । कीर्त तरि कैसी वाखाणावी ॥१॥
 खोट्या तंव नाहीं अनुवादाचें काम । उरला भ्रम वरि बरा ॥२॥
 ह्मणवावें त्याची खुण नाहीं हातीं । अवकळा फजिती सावकाशें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हेंगे तुमचें माझें तोंड । होऊनिया लंड आळवितों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whom shall I praise, and how shall I glorify Your fame? For what is false, there is no need for commentary; whatever delusion remains on the surface, let it be. The signs that one claims to bear are not in hand; disgrace and shame unfold at leisure.

Says Tuka, here is the truth between You and me: I have become shameless and I call out to You openly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whom shall I praise, and how should I tell out Your fame? For what is false there is no use in fine talk; whatever delusion is left on top, let it stay. The marks one claims to wear are not in my hand; the disgrace and the shaming unfold at their own pace. Tuka says: here is the truth between You and me. I have become shameless, and I call out to You openly.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram drops all pretense of being a worthy devotee. He confesses he has no genuine credentials, no inner signs to show; whatever looks like attainment is surface delusion, and exposure will come in its own time. Rather than dress this up, he sets it plainly before God as the honest fact between them. His only move left is to abandon shame and cry out openly, just as he is. The poem turns weakness into the one true prayer: a frank, unguarded appeal with nothing to hide behind.

GATHA 2233

Longing and Separation

Longing, every power spent

मराठी मूळ

कांहीं च न लगे आदि अवसान । बहुत कठीण दिसतसां ॥१॥
 अवध्याच माझ्या वेचविल्या शक्ती । न चलेसी युक्ति जाली पुढें ॥२॥
 बोलिलें वचन हारपलें नभीं । उतरलों तों उभीं आहों तैसीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कांहीं न करावेंसें जालें । थकित चि ठेलें वित्त उगें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Nothing seems to matter, neither beginning nor end. You appear most unyielding.

I have spent all my powers, and no strategy avails me any longer. My spoken words have vanished into the sky; I remain standing just where I started.

Says Tuka, nothing more can be done. The mind sits stunned and silent.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Nothing holds, neither beginning nor end. You look very hard to me. I have spent all my powers, and now no scheme works any longer. The words I spoke have vanished into the sky; I am left standing just where I began. Tuka says: there is nothing left to do. The mind sits stunned, and the wealth in it goes still.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the exhaustion of a soul that has tried everything to reach God and failed. He can find no foothold, beginning or end, and God seems immovably hard. Every effort, every clever approach, is used up; his prayers seem to dissolve into empty sky, leaving him exactly where he started. The poem ends not in triumph but in stunned silence, all striving spent. This emptied-out helplessness is itself the honest ground of longing, the place where the seeker has nothing left but the waiting.

GATHA 2234

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the knot of bondage undone

मराठी मूळ

रूपें गोविलें चित्त । पायीं राहिलें निश्चिंत ॥१॥
 तुझीं देवा अवघे चि गोमटे । मुख देखतां दुःख न भेटे ॥२॥
 जाली इंद्रियां विश्रांति । भ्रमतां पीडत ते होतीं ॥३॥ ॥२०॥
 तुका ह्याने भेटी । सुटली भवबंदाची गांठी ॥३॥ ॥२०॥
 स्वामींनीं तेरा दिवस निद्रा केली. मग भगवंतें येऊन समाधान केलें कीं,
 कवित्व कोरडें आहे तें काढणें उदकांतून

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Your form has captivated my chitta; the mind rests securely at Your feet. O God, You are entirely beautiful; upon seeing Your face, sorrow disappears.

The senses have found rest, they who were tormented while wandering. Says Tuka, in Your meeting, the knot of worldly bondage has come undone.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Your form has caught my mind. It rests at Your feet, without a doubt. You, God, are wholly beautiful; when I see Your face, no sorrow meets me. The senses have found rest, the same senses that were tormented while they wandered. Tuka says: in this meeting, the knot of worldly bondage has come loose.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes what happens when the wandering mind finally settles. The beauty of God's form has captured his attention and fixed it securely at the feet. Looking on that face, sorrow simply does not reach him, and the senses that suffered in their restless roaming now come to rest. The meeting itself does the work: the tight knot of worldly bondage unties on its own. Devotion here is not effort but release, the natural quieting of everything that once wandered and ached.

GATHA 2235

Autobiography

Autobiography, the testing fast

मराठी मूळ

थोर अन्याय केला तुझा अंत म्यां पाहिला । जनाचिया बोलासाठीं चित्त क्षोभविलें ॥१॥
 भागविलासी केला सीण अधम मी यातिहीन । झांकूनि लोचन दिवस तेरा राहिलों ॥२॥
 अवघें घालूनियां कोडें तानभुकेचें सांकडें । योगक्षेम पुढें तुज करणें लागेल ॥३॥
 उदकीं राखिले कागद चुकविला जनवाद । तुका ह्मणे ब्रीद साच केलें आपुलें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I committed a great wrong against You by testing Your limits. For the sake of people's talk, I disturbed my own mind.

I caused You weariness and pain; I am a lowly, degraded being. I closed my eyes and lay still for thirteen days.

Placing upon You the burden of hunger and thirst, You will now have to see to my welfare. I saved the papers by keeping them in water and silenced the wagging tongues.

Says Tuka, You have proven Your promise true.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I did a great wrong: I tested Your limit. For the sake of what people were saying, I troubled my own mind. I wore You out, I gave You pain, lowly and outcaste as I am. I shut my eyes and lay still for thirteen days. Laying on You the whole hardship of my hunger and thirst, I left my keeping and care for You to manage. The papers were saved in the water, the wagging tongues were silenced. Tuka says: You have made Your promise come true.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks back on a hard episode and calls his own conduct a wrong. Stung by people's mockery, he put God to the test, lying still with closed eyes for thirteen days and throwing the whole burden of his survival onto the Lord. He confesses this caused God pain and sprang from his own disturbed mind, not from virtue. Yet the outcome vindicated his faith: the papers cast into the water were preserved and the mockers fell silent. The point lands on God's faithfulness, not Tukaram's worthiness; the Lord kept His word even when the test was an offense.

GATHA 2236

Autobiography

Autobiography, the Mother who came

मराठी मूळ

तू कृपाळू माउली आह्मां दीनांची साउली । न संरित आली बाळवेशें जवळी ॥१॥
 माझें केलें समाधान रूप गोजिरें सगुण । निवविलें मन आलिंगन देऊनी ॥२॥
 कृपा केली जना हातीं पायीं ठाव दिला संतीं । कळों नये चित्तीं दुःख कैसें आहे तें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मी अन्यायी क्षमा करीं वो माझे आई । आतां पुढें काई तुज घालूं सांकडें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You are a compassionate Mother, a sheltering shade for the wretched like us. Unreserved, You came to me in the guise of a child.

You gave me peace; Your beautiful, embodied form consoled me. You cooled my mind by holding me in Your embrace.

You showed mercy before the world and gave me a place at the feet of the saints, so that no one might know what sorrow had been within. Says Tuka, I am the offender. Forgive me, O my Mother.

Henceforth, what more shall I trouble You with?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You are a tender Mother, the shade over wretched ones like us. You came close to me, holding nothing back, in the form of a child. You set my mind at peace; Your lovely, embodied form consoled me. You cooled my mind by taking me in Your arms. You showed mercy before everyone and gave me a place at the feet of the saints, so no one could see what sorrow had been inside me. Tuka says: I am the one who did wrong. Forgive me, my Mother. What more shall I burden You with now?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells of being answered after his hard testing, and the answer comes as motherly tenderness. God draws near without reserve, in the gentle guise of a child, and consoles him with an embrace that cools and quiets the mind. Beyond private comfort, God restores him publicly, granting him a place among the saints so the sorrow he carried is hidden from the world's eyes. Against this mercy Tukaram sets his own fault squarely: he is the offender, and he asks his Mother's forgiveness. The poem closes in chastened gratitude, vowing not to lay further trouble on the One who has already done so much.

GATHA 2237

Autobiography

Penitence, fear of grieving God

मराठी मूळ

कापो कोणी माझी मान सुखें पीडोत दुर्जन । तुज होय सीण तें मी न करीं सर्वथा ॥१॥
 चुकी जाली एकवेळा मज पासूनि चांडाळा । उभें करोनियां जळा माजी वहण राखिल्या ॥२॥
 नाहीं केला हा विचार माझा कोण अधिकार । समर्थासी भार न कळे कैसा घालावा ॥३॥
 गेलें होऊनियां मागें नये बोलों तें वाउगें । पुढिलिया प्रसंगें तुका ह्मणे जाणावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let anyone cut my throat; let the wicked torment me freely. But I will never do what causes You pain, not under any circumstance.

This mistake happened once at my pitiable hands. You made me stand in the water and kept the notebooks safe.

I did not consider whose authority I was overriding or how to place this burden on the Capable One. What is done is done; it is useless to speak of it now.

Says Tuka, let the future be guided by this lesson.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let anyone cut my throat. Let the wicked torment me as they please. I will never do the thing that gives You pain. Not ever. This mistake came once from me, a wretch. You stood me in the water and kept the notebooks safe. I never thought whose right I was overriding. I never thought how I should lay such a burden on the Capable One. What is gone is gone; it is useless to speak of it now. Tuka says: let what comes next be guided by this lesson.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures his own offense against everything else he might suffer. He says he would rather have his throat cut than do one thing that pains his Lord, and that ranks God's pain far above his own. He confesses a single fault that he did not weigh in advance: he acted without asking by what authority, and he loaded his trouble onto God, who then saved both him and the books in the water. The lesson he draws is not endless guilt but watchfulness: the past cannot be undone, so let it teach what to do the next time.

GATHA 2238

Autobiography

Helplessness, refuge in mercy

मराठी मूळ

काय जाणें मी पामर पांडुरंगा तुझा पार । धरिलिया धीर काय एक न करिसी ॥१॥
 उताविळ जालों आधीं मतिमंद हीनबुद्ध । परि तूं कृपानिधी नाहीं केला अद्वेष्ट ॥२॥
 तूं देवांचा ही देव अवघ्या ब्रह्मांडाचा जीव । आह्वां दासां कींव कां भाकणें लागली ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे विश्वंभरा मी तों पतित चि खरा । अन्याय दुसरा दारीं धरणें बैसलों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What do I, a wretch, know of Your depths, O Panduranga? When You hold firm, there is nothing You cannot accomplish. I was hasty before, dull-witted and base, yet You, O treasury of compassion, did not cast me aside.

You are the God of gods, the life of the entire universe. Why must we, Your servants, have to plead for Your mercy? Says Tuka, O Sustainer of the World, I am truly a fallen one. My other offense is that I sat at Your door insisting.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What do I, a poor wretch, know of Your depths, O Panduranga? When You hold firm, there is nothing You cannot do. I was hasty at first, dull and low in mind. Yet You, treasury of mercy, did not throw me away. You are the God of gods. You are the life of the whole universe. Why must we, Your servants, have to beg for Your mercy? Tuka says: O Sustainer of the World, I am truly a fallen one. My second offense is this: I sat down at Your door and would not leave.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram admits he cannot fathom God and cannot manage his own life, and rests the whole outcome on God's power instead. He owns his haste and dullness, then turns it into wonder that such a Lord did not discard him. The pointed question in the middle is half complaint, half intimacy: if You are the life of all things, why should Your own servants have to plead? He ends by naming his stubbornness as a fault and a strategy at once: a fallen man who simply refuses to leave God's doorstep until mercy is given.

GATHA 2239

Autobiography

Gratitude, the cost God bore

मराठी मूळ

नव्हती आली सीसा सुरी अथवा घाय पाठीवरी । तो म्यां केला हरी एवढा तुझां आकांत ॥१॥
 वांटिलासी दोहीं ठायीं मजपाशीं आणि डोहीं । लागों दिला नाहीं येथें तेथें आघात ॥२॥
 जीव घेती मायबापें थोडण अन्याच्या कोपें । हें तों नव्हे सोपें साहों तों चि जाणीतलें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कृपावंता तुज ऐसा नाहीं दाता । काय वाणूं आतां वाणी माझी कुंटली ॥३॥
 वर्षाव केला

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

No blade came to my throat, nor blows upon my back, yet I caused You, O Hari, this much anguish. You divided Your care between two places, my person and the river, letting no harm befall either here or there.

Parents may take a child's life in a brief fit of anger; this is not easy to endure, and I knew it even as I bore it. Says Tuka, O gracious One, there is no giver like You. What more can I say? My tongue has grown silent.

IN PLAIN WORDS

No knife came to my throat. No blows fell on my back. Yet I caused You, Hari, this much anguish. You split Yourself between two places, beside me and in the river, and let no harm reach either, here or there. Parents will take a child's life in a small fit of anger. That is not easy to bear, and I knew it even while I bore it. Tuka says: O gracious One, there is no giver like You. What can I say now? My tongue has gone silent.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reckons up what God suffered on his behalf and finds his own pain was nothing by comparison. No blade touched him; the anguish was God's, who divided attention between the poet and the river to keep both safe. He contrasts this with how a human parent can strike a child to death in a brief rage: ordinary love is not this patient. Set against a giver who absorbs the cost without anger, Tukaram has nothing left to offer but a silenced, grateful tongue.

GATHA 2240

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, beyond all comparison

मराठी मूळ

तू माउलीहून मयाळ चंद्राहून शीतळ । पाणियाहून पातळ कल्लोळ प्रेमाचा ॥१॥
 देऊं काशाची उपमा दुजी तुज पुरुषोत्तमा । ओंवाळूनि नामा तुझ्या वरुनि टाकिलों ॥२॥
 तुवां केलें रे अमृता गोड त्या ही तूं परता । पांचां तत्वांचा जनिता सकळ सत्तानायक ॥३॥
 कांहीं न बोलोनि आतां उगा च चरणीं ठेवितों माथा । तुका ह्याने पंढरिनाथा क्षमा करीं अपराध ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You are more loving than a mother, cooler than the moon, more fluid than water itself, a wave of pure love. What comparison can be offered to You, O Supreme Being? I have waved my hands over Your Name and surrendered everything.

You have made even nectar taste sweeter; You surpass it. Creator of the five elements, sovereign of all power.

Now, saying nothing more, I simply place my head at Your feet in silence. Says Tuka, O Lord of Pandhari, forgive my transgressions.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You are gentler than a mother. You are cooler than the moon. You are more fluid than water, a wave of pure love. What can I set beside You, O Supreme One? There is no second thing. I have waved my hands over Your Name and thrown away everything I had. You made even nectar sweet, and You are beyond nectar too. You are the maker of the five elements, the master of all power. Now I say nothing more. I simply lay my head at Your feet. Tuka says: O Lord of Pandhari, forgive my faults.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reaches for the gentlest and coolest things he knows, mother, moon, water, and finds each one falls short of his Lord. The point of the comparisons is that there is no real comparison: God is the source even of sweetness, the maker of the elements and the master of all power. So the only fitting response is surrender, not praise. He waves the lamp of God's Name over himself, lets go of all he owns, and ends with silence and a bowed head, asking only for forgiveness.

GATHA 2241

Prayers

Prayer, come dwell in my heart

मराठी मूळ

मी अवगुणी अन्यायी किती ह्मणोन सांगों काई । आतां मज पायीं ठाव देई विठ्ठले ॥१॥
 पुरे पुरे हा संसार कर्म बिळवंत दुस्तर । राहों नेदी िस्थर एके ठायीं निश्चळ ॥२॥
 अनेक बुद्धिचे तरंग क्षणक्षणां पालटती रंग । धरुं जातां संग तंव तो होतो बाधक ॥३॥ ॥७॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां अवघी तोडीं माझी चिंता । येऊनि पंढरिनाथा वास करीं हृदयीं ॥३॥ ॥७॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am full of faults and offenses; how much can I recount? Now grant me a place at Your feet, O Vitthal. Enough of this worldly life; karma is powerful and its ocean hard to cross.

It will not let the mind stay still and steady in one place. The waves of restless intellect change color every moment; when I try to hold on to any, it becomes an obstacle.

Says Tuka, now sever all my anxieties, O Lord of Pandhari. Come and dwell in my heart.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How long can I list how full of faults and wrongs I am? Now give me a place at Your feet, O Vitthal. Enough, enough of this worldly life. Karma is strong, and its ocean is hard to cross. It will not let the mind stay still and steady in one place. The waves of the restless mind change color every moment. When I try to hold one, that very holding becomes a snare. Tuka says: now cut away all my anxieties. Come, Lord of Pandhari, and live in my heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram stops cataloguing his faults because the list is endless and asks instead for refuge at Vitthal's feet. He names the trap plainly: karma is too strong to defeat by effort, and the mind itself will not hold still long enough to be mastered. Every passing thought looks like something to grasp, but grasping only entangles him further. So he asks God to do what he cannot: sever the anxieties at the root and take up residence in his heart, making the restless mind God's own dwelling rather than the seeker's battlefield.

GATHA 2242

Devotion to Vitthal

Lover's quarrel, scolding God

मराठी मूळ

बरें आह्मां कळों आलें देवपण । आतां गुज कोण राखे तुझें ॥1॥
 मारिलें कां मज सांग आजिवरी । आतां सरोबरी तुज मज ॥२॥
 जें आह्मी बोलों तें आहे तुझ्या अंगीं । देईन प्रसंगीं आजि शिव्या ॥3॥
 निलाजिरा तुज नाहीं याति कुळ । चोरटा शिंदळ ठावा जना ॥4॥
 खासी धोंडे माती जीव जंत झाडें । एकलें उघडें परदेसी ॥5॥
 गाढव कुतरा ऐसा मज ठावा बईल तूं देवा भारवाही ॥6॥
 लडिका तूं मागें बहुतांसी ठावा । आलें अनुभवा माझ्या तें ही ॥7॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज खविळलें भांडा । आतां धीर तोंडा न धरवे ॥8॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have come to understand Your true nature well. Who will keep Your secret now? Tell me, why have You been striking me all this while? Now You and I are face to face.

Whatever I say is found right in Your own character; today, if the occasion calls for it, I shall give You a scolding. You have no shame, no caste, no clan; the world knows You as a thief and a philanderer.

You eat stones, mud, insects, and leaves; You wander alone and naked. I know You as one who carries loads like a donkey or a dog, O God.

You have been mischievous from the beginning, and many know this. Says Tuka, my anger has been stirred; I can no longer hold my tongue.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have come to know Your godhood well. Who will keep Your secret now? Tell me, why have You been beating me all this time? Now You and I stand face to face. Whatever I say is already there in Your own conduct; today, if the moment calls for it, I will scold You. You have no shame, no caste, no clan. The world knows You as a thief and a seducer. You eat stones, mud, insects, leaves. You wander alone and bare. I know You as one who hauls loads like a donkey or a dog, O God. You have been mischievous from the start, and many know it. It has come into my own experience too. Tuka says: my temper is roused, you brawler; now my tongue will not stay still.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a quarrel between lovers, not blasphemy: Tukaram dares to scold God precisely because the bond is close enough to bear it. He throws back at Krishna the very stories the tradition tells, the butter thief, the charmer of the gopis, the one with no caste or clan, who in his avatars ate dirt as a child and bore burdens for his devotees. Every insult is secretly a list of God's intimacy with the lowly and the ordinary. The heat is real but safe; the point is that a devotee who has truly come to know God can speak to him without ceremony or fear.

GATHA 2243

Devotion to Vitthal

Lover's quarrel, God's evasions

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी भांडों तुजसवें । वर्मी धरुं जालें ठावें ॥१॥
 होसी सरड बेडुक । बाग गांढरा ही पाईक ॥२॥
 बळ करी तया भ्यावें । पळों लागे तया घ्यावें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे दूर परता । नर नारी ना तूं भूता ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We shall quarrel with You; we have grasped Your weak spots. You become a lizard, a frog, a garden snake, and every other crawling thing.

One must fear those who use force; one must seize those who flee. Says Tuka, You stand apart; You are neither man, nor woman, nor spirit.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We will quarrel with You. We have found Your weak spots. You turn into a lizard, a frog, a garden snake, every crawling thing. One has to fear the one who uses force. One has to seize the one who runs away. Tuka says: You stand far off. You are not man, not woman, not a spirit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram keeps up the playful fight, claiming he has learned how God slips away. The shifting shapes, lizard, frog, snake, name God's endless evasions and disguises whenever the devotee tries to pin him down. The middle line states the rule of the chase: power must be feared, but a runaway must be grabbed and held. The closing line is the real point under the teasing: God cannot finally be caught by any category at all, being neither man nor woman nor ghost, which is why the lover must hold on rather than define.

GATHA 2244

Longing and Separation

Reckoning the debt, no more restraint

मराठी मूळ

काय साहतोसी फुका । माझा बुडविला रुका ॥१॥
 रीण घराचें पांगिलें । तें न सुटे कांहीं केलें ॥२॥
 चौघांचिया मते । आधीं खरें केलें होते ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे यावरी । आतां भीड कोण धरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why do You suffer silently for nothing? My coin has been lost because of You. The debt of this household has been incurred, and nothing I do can discharge it.

It was all confirmed before witnesses at the start. Says Tuka, after all this, who would hold back any restraint?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why do You bear it in silence for nothing? My coin has been sunk because of You. The household's debt has been run up, and nothing I do will clear it. It was all settled before witnesses at the start. Tuka says: after all this, who would hold back now?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as a man who has spent everything on God and now wants an accounting. The lost coin and the unpayable household debt are the costs of a life staked wholly on devotion; he points out that God sits silent while the bill mounts. He reminds God that the bargain was struck openly, with witnesses, so it cannot now be denied. Having given all and bound God by agreement, he concludes that he has earned the right to drop all politeness and press his claim without restraint.

GATHA 2245

Devotion to Vitthal

The child's loving quarrel

मराठी मूळ

प्रीतीचा कलहे पदरासी घाली पीळ । सरों नेदी बाळ मागें पुढें पित्यासी ॥१॥
 काय लागे त्यासी बळ हेडावितां कोण काळ । गोवितें सबळ जाळीं स्नेहसूत्राचीं ॥२॥
 सलगी दिला लाड बोले तें तें वाटे गोड । करी बुझावोनि कोड हातीं देऊनि भातुकें ॥३॥ ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे बोल कोणा हें कां नेणां नारायणा । सलगीच्या वचना कैचें उपजे विषम ॥३॥ ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A child quarrels out of love, tugging at the parent's garment, never letting the father move forward or back. What force can prevail against one who, at any moment, can entangle the mighty in the net of affection? Indulged and given liberties, whatever the child says sounds sweet; the parent coaxes and gives a toy to pacify. Says Tuka, why do You not understand this, O Narayana? From words spoken in intimacy, no real bitterness can arise.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A child quarrels out of love and tugs at the hem of the cloth. It will not let the father go forward or back. What strength can stand against the child? At any moment it can tangle the strong one in the net of affection. Petted and given its way, whatever the child says sounds sweet. The parent soothes it and puts a toy in its hand to quiet it. Tuka says: how do You not understand this, Narayana? From words spoken in closeness, no real bitterness can come.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram explains the meaning of all his scolding through the image of a small child gripping its father's garment. The child's quarrel has no malice in it; it is the very strength of love that binds the mighty parent and stops him from moving. Such a child gets indulged, soothed, handed a toy, because its sharpest words still sound sweet. He then asks God to read his own complaints the same way: spoken from intimacy, they carry no bitterness, only the demanding tenderness of one who is sure he is loved.

GATHA 2246

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the Vaishnavas arrive

मराठी मूळ

भार देखोनि वैष्णवांचे । दूत पळाले यमाचे ॥१॥
 आले आले वैष्णववीर । काळ कांपती असुर ॥२॥
 गरुडटक्याच्या भारें । भूमी गर्जे जेजेकारें ॥ १२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Seeing the host of Vaishnavas, the messengers of Yama fled. The Vaishnava warriors have arrived; Death and the demons tremble before them.

Under the weight of Garuda's banners, the earth resounds with cries of triumph.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Seeing the host of the Vaishnavas, Yama's messengers fled. They have come, they have come, the Vaishnava warriors; Death and the demons tremble. Under the weight of Garuda's banners, the earth roars with cries of victory.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram paints the gathering of devotees as an arriving army before which death itself retreats. When the host of Vaishnavas appears, the agents of Yama, the lord of death, simply run, and the demons shake. The Garuda banners and the thundering shouts of victory turn the bhakti procession into a triumph: the company of God's lovers is itself a power that the forces of dying cannot face. The verse celebrates the safety and might that belong to those who walk together in the Name.

GATHA 2247

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, Death takes flight

मराठी मूळ

तुका ह्मणे काळ । पळे देखोनियां बळ ॥३॥ ॥१॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Says Tuka, Death himself flees upon seeing their strength.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka says: Death himself runs when he sees their strength.

WHAT IT MEANS

This single closing line drives home the scene of the devotees as an unbeatable host. Even Yama, death in person, does not stand and fight; he flees the moment he sees the strength of God's lovers. The strength meant is not muscle but the power of the Name and the company that carries it. For Tukaram, this is the final reassurance: join the band of the faithful, and the one thing every soul fears turns and runs.

GATHA 2248

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the body is on loan

मराठी मूळ

रंगीं रंगें रे श्रीरंगे । काय भुललासी पतंगें ॥१॥
 शरीर जायांचें ठेवणें । धरिंसी अभिळास झणें ॥२॥
 नव्हे तुझा हा परिवार । द्रव्य दारा क्षणभंगुर ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O soul, be dyed in the color of Shrirang. Why are you infatuated like a moth drawn to flame? This body is only a temporary deposit; do not hold undue desire for it.

Your family, wealth, and spouse are not truly yours; they are all fleeting.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O soul, be dyed in the color of Shrirang. Why are you fooled like a moth flying into the flame? This body is only a thing left on deposit. Do not cling to it with greedy desire. This household is not really yours. Wealth and wife break in a moment.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram urges the soul to soak itself in God, Shrirang, instead of rushing toward what destroys it like a moth at the lamp. The body, he says, is not owned but held on deposit, to be returned, so it is folly to crave and hoard it. Family, wealth, and spouse look solid but can shatter in an instant. The warning is not contempt for these things; it is a call to fix desire on the one color that does not fade and to hold the passing world with an open hand.

GATHA 2249

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the one companion at death

मराठी मूळ

अंतकाळींचा सोडरा । तुका ह्मणे विठो धरा ॥३॥ ॥१॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Says Tuka, at the hour of death, the only true companion is Vitthal. Hold fast to Him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka says: at the hour of death, your only true companion is Vitthal. Hold fast to him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips away every other support a person leans on and names the one that will still be there at the end. At the hour of death, friends, kin, and possessions all fall away; only Vitthal remains as a real companion. So the instruction is plain and urgent: take hold of him now, and do not let go.

GATHA 2250

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the squandered birth

मराठी मूळ

जन्मा येउनि काय केलें । तुवां मुदल गमाविलें ॥१॥
कां रे न फिरसी माघारा । अझुनि तरी फजितखोरा ॥२॥
केली गांठोळीची नासी । पुढें भीके चि मागसी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Having been born as a human, what have you accomplished? You have squandered your very capital. Why do you not turn back even now, O shameless one? You have destroyed what was tied in your bundle, and now you shall beg from door to door.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You were born a human. What have you done with it? You have lost your very capital. Why do you not turn back even now, you shameless one? You have wasted what was tied in your bundle, and now you will beg from door to door.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks straight to the listener about a life being thrown away. The human birth is the capital, the rare chance to win God, and it is being squandered. He calls the listener shameless not in contempt but to break the sleep of someone who keeps spending and never turns around. The warning is concrete: waste what you were given and you end up a beggar, with nothing saved for the road ahead. The point is to turn back while there is still time.

GATHA 2251

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, return to your true home

मराठी मूळ

तुका ह्मणे ठाया । जाई आपल्या आलिया ॥३॥ ॥१॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Says Tuka, go to your rightful home when you have the chance.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka says: go to your own home while you still have the chance.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names where a person truly belongs and the narrow window for reaching it. Your rightful home is God, not this passing world. The phrase 'while you have the chance' carries the weight: the chance does not last, so go now. It is the same urgency as turning back before the capital runs out, said as a single quiet command.

GATHA 2252

Prayers

Prayer, plea from the wilderness of Maya

मराठी मूळ

पंढरीस जाते निरोप आइका । वैकुंठनायका क्षम सांगा ॥१॥
 अनाथांचा नाथ हें तुझें वचन । धांवें नको दीन गांजों देऊं ॥२॥
 ग्रासिलें भुजंगें सर्पें महाकाळें । न दिसे हें जाळें उगवतां ॥३॥
 कामक्रोधसुनीं श्वापदीं बहुतीं । वेढलों आवताअ मायेचिये ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुवां धरिलें उदास । तरि पाहों वास कवणाची ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am going to Pandhari; hear my message. Tell the Lord of Vaikuntha that I seek His refuge.

'Protector of the helpless' is Your own promise; run to us, do not let the pitiable be tormented. The great serpent of time has swallowed us; this net is invisible even at dawn.

Dogs of lust and anger, wild beasts of many kinds, have encircled us in the wilderness of Maya. The waters of this muddy river do not drown outright but keep pulling us under and pushing us up.

Says Tuka, if You have chosen to remain indifferent, then whose refuge shall we seek?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am going to Pandhari. Hear my message. Tell the Lord of Vaikuntha that I seek his refuge. You called yourself the protector of the helpless; that is your own promise. So run to us. Do not let the wretched be tormented. The great serpent of time has swallowed us, and this net cannot be seen even at dawn. Dogs of lust and anger, many wild beasts, have circled us in the forest of Maya. The waters of this muddy river do not drown me outright; they keep pulling me under and pushing me up. Tuka says: if you have chosen to stay indifferent, then whose shelter shall we seek?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sends a message ahead to Pandhari and holds God to his own word. Narayana has called himself the protector of the helpless, so Tukaram presses that promise: run, do not let the wretched suffer. He paints the danger in stark images: time as a serpent that has already swallowed him, lust and anger as dogs and beasts hunting him through the forest of Maya, and worldly life as a muddy river that will not even let him drown cleanly but keeps tossing him. The closing line is the whole stake: if God turns away, there is no other refuge to run to. The prayer leans its entire weight on God being who he says he is.

GATHA 2253

Prayers

Prayer, the saints' recommendation

मराठी मूळ

कृपाळू सज्जन तुम्ही संतजन । हें चि कृपादान तुमचें मज ॥१॥
 आठवण तुम्ही द्यावी पांडुरंगा । कींवा माझी सांगा काकुलती ॥२॥
 अनाथ अपराधी पतिताआगळा । परि पायांवेगळा नका करूं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुम्ही निरविल्यावरि । मग मज हरि उपेक्षीना ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O compassionate saints, grant me this one mercy. Remind Panduranga of me; tell Him of my pitiful entreaty.

I am helpless, sinful, worse than the fallen, yet do not separate me from His feet. Says Tuka, once you have recommended me, Hari will not neglect me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Compassionate ones, you saints, grant me this one mercy. Remind Panduranga of me. Tell him of my pitiful plea. I am helpless, sinful, lower than the fallen; yet do not keep me away from his feet. Tuka says: once you have spoken for me, Hari will not neglect me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram approaches God not directly but through the saints, asking them to put in a word. He owns his condition without softening it: helpless, sinful, worse than the fallen. Yet even so he begs not to be cut off from God's feet. The trust at the end is the heart of it: he believes the saints' recommendation carries weight, that once they speak for him Hari cannot ignore him. The poem shows how the company of holy people becomes the bridge to grace.

GATHA 2254

The Saints

Devotion to the saints, carried by their grace

मराठी मूळ

संतांचिया पायीं माझा विश्वास । सर्वभावे दास जालों त्यांचा ॥1॥
 ते चि माझें हित करिती सकळ । जेणें हा गोपाळ कृपा करी ॥ध्रु॥
 भागलिया मज वाहतील कडे । यांचियातें जोडे सर्व सुख ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे शेष घेईन आवडी । वचन न मोडीं बोलिलों तें ॥3॥ ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My faith rests at the feet of the saints; I have become their servant with my whole being. They alone do everything for my welfare, by which Gopala bestows His grace.

When I am exhausted, they carry me on their shoulders; through their company, all happiness is won. Says Tuka, I shall gladly accept their leftovers. I will not break the word I have spoken.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My faith rests at the feet of the saints. With my whole being I have become their servant. They are the ones who do all my good, the good through which Gopala shows his grace. When I am worn out, they carry me on their shoulders. In their company every happiness is won. Tuka says: I will gladly take their leftovers. I will not break the word I have spoken.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram places his whole trust in the saints and makes himself their servant. He sees them as the channel of God's grace: it is through them that Gopala's mercy reaches him. The image of being carried on their shoulders when exhausted shows how much he depends on them, not on his own strength. Accepting their leftovers is an act of glad humility, taking even the lowest place near them, and his closing vow not to break his word seals the surrender. The saints, for him, are the road to God, not a detour from it.

GATHA 2255

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the puppeteer beyond qualities

मराठी मूळ

लाघवी सूत्रधारी दोरी नाचवी कुसरी । उपजवी पाळूनि संसारि नानापरिचीं लाघवें ॥1॥
 पुरोनि पंढरिये उरलें भक्तिसुखें लांचावलें । उभें चि राहिलें कर कटीं न बैसे ॥ध्रु॥
 बहु काळें ना सावळें बहु कठिण ना कोवळें । गुणत्रया वेगळें बहुबळें आधीलें ॥2॥
 असोनि नसे सकळांमधीं मना अगोचर बुद्धी । स्वामी माझा कृपानिधि तुका ह्मणे विठ्ठल ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The skillful Puppeteer pulls the strings with artistry, creating, sustaining, and enacting the manifold wonders of this world. Having filled Pandhari to the brim, overflowing with the joy of devotion, He remains standing, hands on hips, never sitting down.

Neither too dark nor too fair, neither too hard nor too soft, beyond the three qualities, established by immense strength. Present in all yet present in none, beyond the reach of mind and intellect.

Says Tuka, my Lord, that treasury of compassion, is Vitthal.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The skillful one holds the strings and makes the puppet dance with art. He creates, he sustains, he plays out the many wonders of this world. He filled Pandhari to the brim and still overflows, hungry for the joy of devotion. He just stands there, hands on his hips, and never sits down. Not too dark, not too fair; not too hard, not too soft; beyond the three qualities, holding everything by his vast strength. Present in all and yet present in none, past the reach of mind and intellect. Tuka says: my Lord, that treasury of compassion, is Vitthal.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram holds two truths together: the God who stands plainly on the brick at Pandhari is the same hidden power who runs the whole world. As puppeteer he creates, sustains, and plays out everything, pulling strings no one sees. Yet he is beyond every measure: not this color or that, beyond the three gunas, present everywhere and yet graspable nowhere by mind or reason. The wonder is that this unreachable one chooses to stand still at Pandhari, hands on hips, drawn by nothing but love. Tukaram names the formless absolute and the visible Vitthal as one and the same treasury of compassion.

GATHA 2256

Longing and Separation

Longing, aching for the sight of God

मराठी मूळ

कीर्तन ऐकावया भुलले श्रवण । श्रीमुख लोचन देखावया ॥१॥
उदित हें भाग्य होईल कोणे काळीं । चित्त तळमळी ह्मणऊनि ॥२॥
उतावीळ बाहणा भेटिलागीं दंड । लोटांगणीं घड जावयासी ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे माथा ठेवीन चरणीं । होतील पारणी इंद्रियांची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My ears are entranced, longing to hear kirtan. My eyes yearn to behold His holy face.

When will such fortunate time arise? My chitta aches with this longing. My arms are eager to embrace Him; my body yearns to prostrate itself before Him in full surrender.

Says Tuka, I shall place my head at His feet, and the hunger of all my senses will be satisfied.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My ears are spellbound, longing to hear the kirtan. My eyes ache to see his holy face. When will this good fortune come? My mind keeps churning with the wait. My arms are restless to embrace him; my whole body strains to fall down before him. Tuka says: I will lay my head at his feet, and then the hunger of all my senses will be fed.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a longing that has taken hold of every sense at once. His ears hunger for kirtan, his eyes for God's face, his arms to embrace, his body to prostrate. The ache is not vague; it is a restless waiting, asking when the fortune of meeting will finally dawn. He pictures the moment of relief as laying his head at God's feet, and only then are the senses, which until now have starved, at last satisfied. The poem makes the body itself the instrument of devotion, every limb leaning toward God.

GATHA 2257

The Power of the Name

The Name, the body cooled by remembrance

मराठी मूळ

नाम घेतां कंठ शीतळ शरीर । इंद्रियां व्यापार नाठवती ॥१॥
 गोड गोमटें हें अमृतासी वाड । केला कइवाड माझ्या चित्तें ॥२॥
 प्रेमरसें जाली पुष्ट अंगकांति । त्रिविध सांडिती ताप अंग ॥३॥ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तेथें विकाराची मात । बोलों नये हित सकळांचें ॥३॥ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the Name is on my lips, the body grows cool, and the senses forget their usual occupations. This sweetness surpasses even nectar; my chitta has made a great celebration of it.

The glow of my body has grown radiant with the sap of love, and the threefold afflictions have left my being. Says Tuka, in that state, the sway of worldly passions has no voice; this is the true welfare of all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the Name is on my lips, my throat goes cool and my body with it. My senses forget their usual business. This is sweet and lovely, greater than nectar; my mind has thrown itself wholly into it. With the sap of love my body has grown radiant, and the threefold suffering has left me. Tuka says: in that state, worldly passion has no voice. This is the true good of everyone.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes what taking God's Name does to the whole person. The Name brings a coolness that spreads through the body and quiets the senses, which forget their ordinary cravings. He calls it sweeter than nectar, and his mind has plunged into it completely. The fruit is plain: the body glows with the sap of love, the threefold afflictions fall away, and worldly passion has nothing left to say. He ends by widening it past himself: this is not his private experience but the true welfare available to all who take the Name.

GATHA 2258

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, worship as faithful duty

मराठी मूळ

स्वामिकाज गुरुभक्ति । पितृवचन सेवा पति ॥१॥
 हे चि विष्णूची महापूजा । अनुभाव नाही दुजा ॥२॥
 सत्य बोले मुखें । दुखवे आणिकांच्या दुःखें ॥३॥
 निश्चयाचें बळ । तुका ह्मणे तें च फळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Service to one's master, devotion to the guru, obedience to a father's word, and a wife's faithful service to her husband: these are the highest worship of Vishnu; there is no other experience to match them. Speak only truth with your lips, and feel the pain of others as your own.

Says Tuka, the strength of firm resolve is itself the fruit.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Doing your master's work, devotion to the guru, obeying your father's word, faithful service to your husband: this is the great worship of Vishnu. There is no other experience to match it. Speak only truth with your mouth. Feel the pain of others as your own. Tuka says: the strength of firm resolve is itself the fruit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram locates worship not in ritual but in how a person lives their ordinary duties and bonds. Doing one's appointed work, honoring guru and father, keeping faith in marriage: these, done rightly, are the highest worship of Vishnu, with nothing higher to seek. Alongside them he sets a plain ethic: speak truth, and let the suffering of others touch you as if it were yours. The closing line gathers it: the very firmness of resolve to live this way is already the reward, not merely a means to one. Devotion here is steady right living, not display.

GATHA 2259

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, only love as the currency

मराठी मूळ

चित्त घेऊनियां तू काय देसी । ऐसें मजपासीं सांग आधीं ॥१॥
 तरि च पंढरिराया करिण साटोवाटी । नेघें जया तुटी येईल तें ॥२॥
 रिद्धिसिद्ध कांहीं दाविसी अभिळास । नाहीं मज आस मुक्तीची ही ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुझें माझें घडे तर । भक्तीचा भाव रे देणें घेणें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If You take my chitta, tell me first what You will give in return. Only then, O Lord of Pandhari, will I make this exchange; I will not accept a deal that leads to loss.

If You dangle riches and powers before me, know that I have no desire even for liberation. Says Tuka, if a true bond is to form between You and me, let devotion be the only currency of giving and receiving.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If you take my mind, what will you give me in return? Tell me that first. Only then, Lord of Pandhari, will I make the trade. I will not accept a bargain that ends in loss. If you dangle riches and powers before me, know this: I have no craving even for liberation. Tuka says: if a bond is to form between you and me, then let devotion be the only thing we give and take.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the language of bargaining on God, half playful and wholly serious. He will hand over his mind, but he wants to know the terms first, refusing any exchange that leaves him poorer. Then he names what he will not be paid in: not riches, not occult powers, not even moksha, the prize most seekers want. The only currency he will accept is bhakti itself, love given and received. The point is sharp: he does not want God's gifts in place of God; he wants the relationship, and devotion is the whole of the deal.

GATHA 2260

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, made into a beggar by God

मराठी मूळ

तुझा संग पुरे संग पुरे । संगति पुरे विठोबा ॥१॥
 आपल्या सारिखें करिसी दासां । भिकारिसा जग जाणे ॥२॥
 रूपा नाहीं ठाव नांवा । तैसें आमुचें करिसी देवा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने तोयें आपुलें भेंडोळें । करिसी वाटोळें माझें तैसें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Enough of Your company, O Vitthal, enough. You make Your servants just like Yourself, and the world sees them as beggars.

You have no fixed form, no settled name, and You would make our condition the same. Says Tuka, You first wrap Your own bundle in rags, and then You do the same to mine.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Enough of your company, Vithoba, enough. You make your servants just like yourself, and then the world sees them as beggars. You have no fixed form and no settled name, and you would make us the same. Tuka says: you first wrap your own bundle in rags, and then you do the same to mine.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram complains to Vithoba with affection and a knowing smile. The complaint is that God remakes his devotees in his own likeness: since God has no fixed form or name and owns nothing, his servants too end up formless, nameless, and looking like beggars to the world. The image of the rag-wrapped bundle is the joke and the point at once: God carries his own goods in rags, and he hands the same lot to his own. Beneath the teasing is praise, that being made poor and unmarked like God is exactly what the devotee has received, even if the world calls it loss.

GATHA 2261

Prayers

Surrender, holding God to his name

मराठी मूळ

आतां मज तारीं । वचन हें साच करीं ॥१॥
 तुझें नाम दिनानाथ । िब्रदावळी जगविख्यात ॥१॥
 कोण लेखी माझ्या दोषा । तुझा त्रिभुवनीं ठसा ॥२॥
 वांयां जातां मज । तुका ह्मणे तुझां लाज ॥३॥
 मायबाप चुलता बंधु । अवघा तुजशीं संबंधु ॥१॥
 उभयकुळींसाक्ष । तूं चि माझा मातुळपक्ष ॥२॥
 समपिनली काया । तुका ह्मणे पंढरिराया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Save me now; make Your word come true. Your name is Lord of the Lowly; Your fame is renowned across the world.

Who can count my faults when Your seal is upon all three worlds? Says Tuka, if I am lost, the shame is Yours. Mother, father, uncle, brother: all my relations are with You alone.

In both clans You are my witness; You alone are my maternal kin. Says Tuka, I have surrendered this body to You, O Lord of Pandhari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Save me now. Make your word come true. Your name is Lord of the Lowly; your fame is known across the world. Who can count up my faults, when your seal is set on all three worlds? Tuka says: if I am lost, the shame is yours. Mother, father, uncle, brother: all my kinship is with you alone. In both my families you are the witness; you yourself are my mother's side. Tuka says: I have given over this body to you, O Lord of Pandhari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pleads to be saved and then presses God with God's own reputation: you are called Lord of the Lowly, so live up to the name. He refuses to let his sins be the measure; against the One whose mark is on all three worlds, what is a tally of faults? Then he turns the responsibility around: if a man who has surrendered is still lost, the disgrace falls on his protector, not on him. He names God as every relation he has, mother, father, uncle, brother, his entire family on both sides, so there is no one else to turn to. The body is handed over to Vitthal of Pandhari, and with it the whole burden of being saved.

GATHA 2262

*The Necessity of Experience**Knowledge, the taste belongs to the eater*

मराठी मूळ

वेदाचा तो अर्थ आह्मांसी च ठावा । येरांनी वाहावा भार माथां ॥१॥
 खादल्याची गोडी देखिल्यासी नाही । भार धन वाही मजुरीचें ॥२॥
 उत्पित्पाळणसंहाराचें निज । जेणें नेलें बीज त्याचे हातीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आलें आपण चि फळ । हातोहातीं मूळ सांपडलें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The true meaning of the Vedas is known to us alone; let others carry the load upon their heads. The sweetness of eating belongs to the one who eats, not to the one who merely watches; the porter carries the wealth for wages.

The secret of creation, preservation, and dissolution is in the hands of the One who holds the seed. Says Tuka, the fruit has come of its own accord, and the root has been found in our very hands.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The true meaning of the Vedas is known to us alone; let others carry the load on their heads. The one who watches does not taste the sweetness of what is eaten; the porter only hauls the wealth for his wages. The secret of creation, keeping, and dissolution belongs to the One who holds the seed. Tuka says: the fruit has come of itself, and the root has been found in our own hands.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram claims that the heart of the Vedas is grasped by the devotee, not by the one who merely carries the texts as a burden of learning. He sets two figures against each other: the eater who tastes the sweetness, and the porter who lugs another man's wealth and is paid only in wages. Scholarship without devotion is that porter, handling the treasure but never owning it. The real key is held by the One who holds the seed of all creation, preservation, and dissolution. To find that One is to find the fruit ripening on its own and the root itself in your hands; you no longer need to carry the load.

GATHA 2263

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, sitting in protest at God's door

मराठी मूळ

आमचा तूं ऋणी ठायींचा चि देवा । मागावया ठेवा आलों दारा ॥1॥
 वर्म तुझें आह्मां सांपडलें हातीं । धरियेले चित्तीं दृढ पाय ॥ध्रु॥
 बैसलों धरणें कोंडोनियां द्वारीं । आंतूनि बाहेरी येओं नेदी ॥2॥
 तुज मज सरी होइल या विचारें । जळो भांडखोरें निलाजिरीं ॥3॥
 भांडवल माझें मिरविसी जनीं । सहजर वोवनी नाममाळा ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी केली जिवें साटी । तुह्मां आह्मां तुटी घालूं आतां ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You have been our debtor from the very beginning, O God. I have come to Your door to claim my treasure.

Your secret is now in our hands; we have firmly clasped Your feet in our chitta. I have sat in protest at Your door, blocking the way in and out.

If You and I must be measured as equals in this contest, then let the shameless quarrel burn. You parade my investment before the world, weaving garlands of Your Name from it.

Says Tuka, we have staked our lives; now let us settle accounts between us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have been our debtor from the very start, O God. I have come to your door to claim what is mine. Your secret is in our hands now; I have clasped your feet firmly in my heart. I have sat down in protest at your door, blocking the way in and out. If you and I are to be weighed as equals in this fight, then let the shameless quarrel burn. You parade my investment before the world, weaving garlands from your Name. Tuka says: we have staked our very lives; now let us settle the account between us.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram comes to God not as a beggar but as a creditor demanding what is owed from the beginning. He says he has found God's weak point and seized his feet, then stages a protest sit-in at the door so God can neither come nor go, the way a creditor once camped outside a debtor's house. He half-laughs at the unseemly quarrel between them, yet refuses to drop it. He even claims the devotion is his own investment that God displays to the world as garlands of the Name. The poem ends as a final reckoning: I have wagered my life, so now the accounts between us must be closed for good.

GATHA 2264

True Worship

True worship, the unwashed mind within

मराठी मूळ

काय धोविलें बाहेरी मन मळलें अंतरीं । गादलें जन्मवरीं असत्यकाटें काटलें ॥१॥
 पापपुण्यविटाळ देहीं भरितां न विचारिसी कांहीं । काय चाचपसी मही जी अखंड सोंवळी ॥२॥
 कामक्रोधा वेगळा ऐसा होई कां सोंवळा । तुका ह्मणे कळा गुंडुन ठेवीं कुसरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why do you wash the outside when the mind is soiled within? You have been plastered over with falsehood since birth. You fill the body with the impurity of sin and merit without a thought, yet you keep touching the earth as if it were eternally pure.

Become free of lust and anger; then you will be truly clean. Says Tuka, roll up your clever tricks and put them away.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What have you washed on the outside, when the mind is dirty within? You have been smeared over since birth, stitched up with the thorns of falsehood. You fill the body with the impurity of sin and merit and never give it a thought, yet you keep touching the earth as if it were forever pure. Become free of lust and anger; then you are truly clean. Tuka says: roll up your clever tricks and put them away.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram attacks the ritual obsession with outer purity while the inner life stays soiled. Washing the body means nothing when the mind has been plastered with falsehood since birth. He points out the contradiction: a person carries the real defilement of sin and merit inside, yet fusses over touching pure ground. The only purity that counts is freedom from lust and anger. The last line tells the clever performer to fold up his tricks; cleverness about purity rules is itself part of the dirt.

GATHA 2265

The Moral Ideal

Moral counsel, truth grows its own sweetness

मराठी मूळ

ऊंस वाढवितां वाढली गोडी । गुळ साकर हे त्याची परवडी ॥१॥
 सत्यकर्म आचरें रे । बापा सत्यकर्म आचरें रे ।
 सत्यकर्म आचरें होईल हित । वाढेल दुःख असत्याचें ॥२॥
 साकरेच्या आळां लाविला कांदा । स्थूळसानापरि वाढे दुगपधा ॥३॥
 सत्य असत्य हें ऐसिया परी । तुका ह्मणे याचा विचार करीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

As sugarcane grows, its sweetness increases; jaggery and sugar are its natural yield. Practice truthful action, O friend, practice truthful action.

Truthful deeds will bring you well-being, while falsehood only multiplies suffering. If you plant an onion in a bed of sugar, it still grows bitter regardless of size.

Says Tuka, reflect upon the nature of truth and untruth in this manner.

IN PLAIN WORDS

As the sugarcane grows, its sweetness grows; jaggery and sugar are what it naturally yields. Practice truthful action, O friend; practice truthful action. Truthful deeds will bring you good; falsehood only makes suffering grow. Plant an onion in a bed of sugar, and large or small it still grows bitter. Truth and untruth are like that. Tuka says: think it over.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram teaches with farming images: a thing yields according to its own nature. Sugarcane grows sweeter as it grows and gives jaggery and sugar; truthful action likewise ripens into well-being. An onion does not turn sweet just because you plant it in sugar; its bitterness is in its nature, no matter how it is surrounded. So a false life cannot be sweetened by good circumstances; it only swells suffering. He ends by asking the listener simply to reflect on which seed he is planting in his own life.

GATHA 2266

Faith and Trust

Faith, the essence is the heart's devotion

मराठी मूळ

पाषाण देव पाषाण पायरी । पूजा एकावरी पाय ठेवी ॥१॥
 सार तो भाव सार तो भाव । अनुभवीं देव ते चि जाले॥२॥
 उदका भिन्न पालट काई । गंगा गोड येरां चवी काय नाहीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हें भाविकांचें वर्म । येरीं धर्माधर्म विचारावें॥३॥ ॥१०॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The stone that is worshipped as God and the stone that serves as a step are both stone; one receives worship while the other bears the weight of feet. The essence is faith, the essence is faith; those who live by experience have themselves become God.

Is water any different from water? The Ganga is holy, but does the other water not also have taste? Says Tuka, this is the secret of the faithful. Let others deliberate over dharma and adharma.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The stone worshipped as God and the stone laid as a step are both stone; one gets worship, the other carries feet. The essence is faith, the essence is faith; those who live by experience have themselves become God. Is one water different from another? The Ganga is holy, but does other water have no taste? Tuka says: this is the secret of the faithful. Let others debate dharma and adharma.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram observes that the idol and the doorstep are the same stone; what divides them is the faith poured into one and not the other. The decisive thing is not the material but the devotion, and those who know God by direct experience have themselves become one with God. He pushes the point with water: all water has taste, yet faith makes the Ganga holy. So holiness lives in the heart's relation, not in the object. This, he says, is the open secret of the devotee; the endless arguing over what is dharma and adharma he leaves to others.

GATHA 2267

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, wake and claim the free treasure

मराठी मूळ

जन्मा येऊनि कां रे निदसुरा । जायें भेटी वरा रखुमाईच्या ॥१॥
 पाप ताप दैन्य जाईल सकळ । पावसी अढळउत्तम तें ॥२॥
 संतमहंतसिद्धहरिदासदाटणी । फिटती पारणीं इंद्रियांचीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तेथें नामाचा गजर । फुकाची अपार लुटी घेई ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why do you sleep through this human birth, O slothful one? Go and meet the Lord of Rakhumai. All sins, suffering, and poverty will vanish, and you will attain that which is imperishable and supreme.

In the gathering of saints, the great ones, the accomplished, and the devotees of Hari, the hunger of the senses is fulfilled. Says Tuka, there the Name resounds; claim freely the boundless treasure that costs nothing.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why sleep through this human birth, you drowsy one? Go and meet the Lord of Rakhumai. Sin, suffering, and misery will all leave you, and you will reach what is unshakable and supreme. In the crowd of saints, great souls, the perfected, and the servants of Hari, the long hunger of the senses is broken. Tuka says: there the Name rings out; take freely the boundless plunder that costs nothing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram shakes a sleeper awake: a human birth is a rare chance, so do not doze through it. The remedy he names is to go and meet Vitthal, the Lord of Rakhumai, who drives off sin, suffering, and poverty and gives the imperishable. He locates this in the company of saints and devotees, where the restless craving of the senses is finally satisfied as at the end of a long fast. The closing image is striking: the Name sounds in that gathering, and its endless treasure can simply be looted for free. The only effort asked is to wake up and go.

GATHA 2268

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the hollow holy man

मराठी मूळ

काय धोविलें कातडें । काळकुट भीतरि कुडें ॥1॥
 उगा राहें लोकभांडा । चाळविल्या पोरें रांडा ॥धु.॥
 घेसी बुंथी पानवथां । उगा च हालविसी माथा ॥2॥
 लावूनि बैसे टाळी । मन इंद्रियें मोकळीं ॥3॥
 हालवीत बैस माळा । विषयजप वेळोवेळां ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे हा व्यापार । नाम विठोबाचें सार ॥5॥ ॥2॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why do you wash only the outer skin when inside you are crooked and dark? Be quiet, you fraud of the world, you who deceive women and children. You sit at bathing ghats and nod your head solemnly for no reason.

You sit with cymbals, while your mind and senses roam free. You move the prayer beads while your real chanting is of sense pleasures, moment after moment.

Says Tuka, all of this is mere show; the Name of Vitthal alone is the true substance.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What have you washed but the outer skin, when inside you are crooked and dark as poison? Be quiet, you fraud of the world; you have fooled women and children. You wrap a shawl at the bathing ghats and nod your head for show. You sit with your cymbals while your mind and senses run loose. You finger the prayer beads, but your real chanting is of sense pleasures, over and over. Tuka says: all this is just business; the Name of Vithoba alone is the substance.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram skewers the performing holy man who scrubs the outside while staying crooked and dark within. The shawl at the ghat, the solemn nodding, the cymbals, the moving beads are all props; underneath, the mind and senses wander and the real, ceaseless chant is for sense pleasures. He calls the whole act a trade, religion run as a business of impressing onlookers. The point lands not as contempt for one man but as a warning about a pattern any of us can slip into: outer display standing in for inner change. The only genuine substance, he says, is the Name of Vithoba itself.

GATHA 2269

Longing and Separation

Longing, calling God to come running

मराठी मूळ

येई वो येई वो येई धांवोनियां । विलंब कां वायां लाविला कृपाळे ॥१॥
 विठाबाई विश्वंभरे भवच्छेदके । कोठें गुंतलीस अगे विश्वव्यापके ॥२॥
 न करीं न करीं न करीं आतां अळस अद्वेरु । द्हावया प्रकट कैचें दूरि अंतरु ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Come, O come, come running. Why this needless delay, O Merciful One? O Vithabai, Sustainer of the universe, Destroyer of worldly bondage, where are You engaged, O all-pervading One? Do not, do not, do not be indifferent or negligent any longer.

To become manifest, what distance is there to cross?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Come, oh come, come running. Why this needless delay, O Merciful One? O Vithabai, Sustainer of the world, breaker of the bondage of becoming, where are you held up, O all-pervading One? Do not, do not, do not be lazy or neglect me any longer. To become visible to me, what distance is there to cross?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram cries out in pure impatience, calling God to come running and demanding why the Merciful One is slow. He addresses God tenderly as Vithabai, the one who sustains the universe and cuts the chain of birth and rebirth, and asks where such an all-pervading One could possibly be detained. The triple no, do not, do not, do not, refuses any excuse of delay or indifference. The final line presses the logic of God's own nature: if you are everywhere already, what distance keeps you from simply showing yourself? Longing here turns into an argument God cannot answer.

GATHA 2270

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, asking God for the right gifts

मराठी मूळ

हें चि याच्या ऐसें मागावें दान । वंदूनि चरण नारायणा ॥१॥
 धीर उदारीव निर्मळ निर्मत्सर । येणें सर्वेश्वर ऐसें नांव ॥२॥
 हा चि होईजेल याचिया विभागें । अनुभववी अंगें अनुभववील ॥३॥
 जोडे तयाचे कां न करावे सायास । जाला तरि अळस दीनपणे ॥४॥
 पावल्यामागें कां न घलावी धांव । धरिल्या तरि हांव बळ येतें ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे घालूं खंडीमध्ये टांक । देवाचें हें एक करुनी घेऊं ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One should ask for gifts like these, bowing at the feet of Narayana: courage, generosity, purity, and freedom from jealousy. By these, one becomes worthy of the name 'Lord of All.' Such qualities one should experience in one's own being and help others experience too.

Why not strive for what is truly beneficial? Even if laziness comes from one's lowly state, one should still run after what has been attained. Says Tuka, let us strike the chisel into the quarry and make God's work our own.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Ask for gifts like these, bowing at the feet of Narayana: steadiness, generosity, purity, freedom from envy. By these one earns the name Lord of All. One becomes this by his share of them; let him taste it in his own body and let others taste it too. Why not labor for what is truly worth gaining? Even if laziness comes from one's lowly state, still run after what you have reached. Why not give chase once you are close behind? Hold on, and the strength and daring come. Tuka says: let us strike the chisel into the quarry and carve out this one thing of God's for ourselves.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says that what we should beg of God is not wealth but character: steadiness, generosity, purity, and freedom from jealousy, the very qualities that make the name Lord of All fitting. These are not just to be admired but lived in one's own being and passed on for others to live too. He then argues against giving up: even if low spirits breed laziness, keep running after the goal you have already neared, because the very act of holding on summons strength and daring. The closing image is a quarryman driving his chisel into rock; spiritual virtue is hard-won work, not a windfall. He resolves to carve this one thing of God's out for himself.

GATHA 2271

The Power of the Name

The Name, catching God in our words

मराठी मूळ

सत्ताबळें येतो मागतां विभाग । लावावया लाग निमित्य करुं ॥१॥
 तुझीं ऐसीं मुखें करुं उच्चारण । बोलें नारायण सांपडवूं ॥२॥
 आसेविण नाहीं उपजत मोहो । तरि च हा गोहो न पडे फंदीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां व्हावें याजऐसें । सरिसें सरिसें समागमें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By the force of our right, we come to claim our share. Let us seize the occasion to begin.

With mouths like Yours, let us utter the Name and catch Narayana in our words. Without desire, infatuation does not arise; without infatuation, one does not fall into delusion's trap.

Says Tuka, now one must become like Him; in equal company, like meets like.

IN PLAIN WORDS

By the force of our right we come to claim our share; let us seize the occasion to begin. With mouths like yours we will utter the Name and catch Narayana in our words. Without desire no infatuation is born; without infatuation a man does not fall into delusion's trap. Tuka says: now one must become like him, equal beside equal, in close company.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram approaches God as one claiming a rightful share, looking for a pretext to begin the work. The plan is bold: with our own mouths we will chant the Name and so catch Narayana, snaring God in our very words. He notes the chain that ordinarily binds people: desire breeds infatuation, and infatuation drops a man into delusion. The way out is to redirect that same clinging toward God. The closing line states the aim of devotion plainly: to become like the Lord, standing as equal beside equal in his intimate company.

GATHA 2272

Worldly Life

Worldly life, nothing moves without the heart

मराठी मूळ

करितां होया व्हावें चित्त चि नाहीं । घटापटा कांहीं करुं नये ॥१॥
मग हालत चि नाहीं जवळून । करावा तो सीण सीणवितो ॥२॥
साहत चि नाहीं कांहीं पांकुळलें । उगल्या उगलें ढळत आहे ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे तरी बोलावें झांकून । येथें खुणे खूण पुरतें चि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the chitta is not in it, nothing can be accomplished; one should not force jars and pots to yield what they do not hold. Then nothing moves from where it is; every effort only adds to weariness.

What is weak cannot withstand anything; even without cause, it totters and sways. Says Tuka, then one should speak with closed lips; here, only the subtle sign answers to the subtle sign.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the heart is not in it, nothing gets done; you cannot force jars and pots to give what they do not hold. Then nothing budes from where it sits, and the effort you make only wears you out. Whatever is weak cannot bear anything; with no cause at all it totters and sways. Tuka says: then one should speak with the lips closed; here, only the subtle sign answers the subtle sign.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram observes that without the chitta, the inner heart, no work truly succeeds; you cannot squeeze from empty vessels what they never contained. When the heart is absent, things stay stuck, and all the straining just exhausts the one who strains. Anything weak collapses on its own, swaying without any push. His counsel is to stop the outer noise and speak with closed lips, because at this level communication is silent: one subtle sign is met by another subtle sign. The teaching is that the real exchange between seeker and God happens beneath words, in the heart, not in forced effort.

GATHA 2273

The Saints

Saints, the place where God lives

मराठी मूळ

संतसंगें याचा वास सर्वकाळ । संचला सकळ मूर्तिनमंत ॥१॥
 घालूनियां काळ अवघा बाहेरी । त्यासी च अंतरीं वास दिला ॥१॥
 आपुलेसें जिहीं नाहीं उरों दिलें । चोजवितां भलें ऐसीं स्थळें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाही झांकत परिमळ । चंदनाचें स्थळ चंदन चि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Through the company of saints, He dwells there at all times, fully embodied and present. Time itself has been banished outward, and He alone is given residence within.

Those who have not kept anything as their own, such are the wondrous places to behold. Says Tuka, fragrance cannot be concealed; the place of sandalwood is always sandalwood.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In the company of saints, He lives there always. He is wholly present, with form. Time is shut out, sent away. To Him alone they give a home inside. They have not kept anything as their own. Look, and you see: these are the good places. Tuka says: fragrance cannot be hidden. The place of sandalwood is sandalwood itself.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is saying where God can actually be found: in the company of the saints, where He dwells at all times, fully present. He pictures these saints as people who have pushed time itself outside and given their whole inner room to God alone. What makes that possible is that they have kept nothing back as their own. The closing image makes the point unanswerable: just as a place full of sandalwood cannot hide its fragrance, a heart emptied for God cannot hide His presence.

GATHA 2274

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the Name as adornment

मराठी मूळ

पुष्ट कांति निवती डोळे । हे सोहळे श्रीरंगीं ॥१॥
 अंतर्बाहीं विलेपन । हें भूषण मिरवूं ॥१॥
 इच्छेऐसी आवड पुरे । विश्वंभरे जवळी ॥२॥
 तुका करी नारायण । या या सेवन नामाचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A radiant complexion, eyes that find contentment: these are the celebrations found in Shrirang. Within and without, this anointing, this adornment, let us display.

Every desire and longing is fulfilled, for the Sustainer of the world is near. Says Tuka, come and partake of the Name of Narayana.

IN PLAIN WORDS

His glowing beauty; my eyes find rest. These are the joys in Shrirang. Inside and out, this anointing. Let me wear it as my ornament. Every wish, every longing, is filled, for the One who holds the world is near. Tuka says: take this, take it, the Name of Narayana.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing the joy of looking at God and finding the eyes at rest in His radiant beauty. He turns devotion into something worn on the body: the love of God smeared inside and out like a fragrant paste, carried as one's only ornament. Because the Sustainer of the world is close, every desire and longing is already met; nothing more is needed. So he ends by pressing it on us twice over, urging us to feed on the one thing that does this, the Name of Narayana.

GATHA 2275

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the spring that never dries

मराठी मूळ

सुकाळ हा दिवसरजनी । नीत धणी नवी च ॥१॥
 करुण सेवूं नानापरी । राहे उरी गोडीनें ॥२॥
 सरे ऐसा नाही झरा । पंक्ती करा समवेत ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने बरवा पान्हा । कान्हाबाई माउलीचा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is abundance day and night, always fresh and ever satisfying. We serve this nectar in countless ways, and still sweetness remains.

This spring never runs dry; come, gather in rows and share it together. Says Tuka, the motherly love of Kanhabai flows beautifully.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It is harvest day and night. The fill of it is always new. We drink this tenderness in many ways. Still sweetness stays behind. There is no spring that runs dry like this one. Come, gather in a row together. Tuka says: the milk flows sweetly, the milk of mother Kanhabai.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is celebrating an abundance that never wears thin: day and night the harvest is full, and however much you take, it is always fresh and the sweetness keeps remaining. He invites others to come and drink it together, sitting in rows like children fed in turn. The closing image makes the source plain: this is mother's milk, the flowing love of Krishna as a nursing mother. The point is that God's grace is not a fixed ration but a spring that cannot be emptied.

GATHA 2276

The Nature of God

The nature of God, one yet everywhere

मराठी मूळ

पाहतां तव एकला दिसे । कैसा असे व्यापक ॥१॥
 ज्याचे त्याचे मिळणीं मिळे । तरी खेळे बहुरूपी ॥२॥
 जाणिवेचें नेदी अंग । दिसों रंग निवडीना ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ये चि ठायीं । हें तों नाहीं सर्वत्र ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When one looks, He appears to be just one, solitary. Yet how is He all-pervading? He blends with each according to their nature, playing the part of many.

He does not reveal Himself through intellectual knowledge; His colors cannot be separated out. Says Tuka, this truth is right here, yet it is not the same everywhere.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When you look, He seems to be one, alone. How then is He everywhere? He blends into each thing's own joining. So He plays in many forms. He does not yield to your knowing. His color cannot be picked apart. Tuka says: He is right here in this very place; and yet He is not the same in every place.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is holding two things together that seem to clash. Look, and God appears single and alone, yet He pervades everything; He does this by merging with each being according to its own nature and so plays as countless forms. He warns that you cannot seize Him with the intellect, his colors will not separate out under analysis. The last line keeps the paradox sharp: He is fully present here in this very spot, and at the same time He is not uniformly available everywhere, so He is found, not deduced.

GATHA 2277

Longing and Separation

Longing, the complaint of the surrendered

मराठी मूळ

तुह्मांसाठीं आह्मां आपुला विसर । करितां अव्हेर कैसें दिसे ॥१॥
 विचाराजी आतां ठायींचें हे देवा । आह्मां नये हेवा वाढवितां ॥२॥
 आलों टाकोनियां सुखाची वसती । पुढें माझ्या युक्ति खुंटलिया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जाला सकळ वृत्तांत । केला प्रणिपात ह्मणऊनि ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

For Your sake, we have forgotten ourselves. How does it look when You disregard us? Consider this from the beginning, O God.

We cannot bear it when You increase our longing. We left behind the comforts of home, and now our wits have reached their end.

Says Tuka, the whole story has been told; that is why I make this prostration.

IN PLAIN WORDS

For Your sake we have forgotten ourselves. When You turn us away, how does that look? Think it over from the start now, God. Do not keep swelling our longing; we cannot bear it. We came, leaving behind the home where we were happy. Now our wits have run out ahead of us. Tuka says: the whole story is told. That is why I bow down low.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the complaint of someone who has already given everything. Tukaram says he has forgotten his own self for God's sake, and then asks how it can look right for God to push him away. He names the real grievance: God keeps increasing the longing rather than fulfilling it, and that the surrendered cannot endure, having left behind every comfort and exhausted their own cleverness. Having laid the whole case out, he ends not in argument but in prostration, putting the matter wholly in God's hands.

GATHA 2278

Prayers

Prayer, holding God to His promise

मराठी मूळ

करावा उद्धार हें तुह्यां उचित । आह्मी केली नीत कळली ते ॥१॥
पाववील हाक धांवा ह्मणऊन । करावें जतन ज्याचें तेणें ॥२॥
दिशतासी बोल ठेवायासी ठाव । ऐसा आह्मी भाव जाणतसों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

It is fitting for You to grant deliverance; we have done our part as we understood it. When one calls out, the promise is that You will come running.

Let each one guard what is theirs. We know Your nature: there is room even for doubtful words at Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To lift us up is right for You to do. We did our duty as we understood it. The promise is: call out, and You come running. Each one must guard what is his own. Tuka says: there is a place even for the doubter's words. Such is the trust we hold.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praying by reminding God of His own promise. He says deliverance is God's proper work, while the devotee's part, done as well as he knew how, is finished; now God is bound by the vow that whoever calls out, He comes running. The line that each must guard what is his own turns it back on God: these calling souls are God's charge to keep. Even the words of a wavering, doubtful heart, he trusts, have a place at God's feet, so he prays without needing to be flawless first.

GATHA 2279

Longing and Separation

Longing, fear at the delay

मराठी मूळ

संताचे उपदेश आमुचे मस्तकीं । नाहीं मृतेलोकीं राहाणेसा ॥१॥
 ह्मणऊनि बहु तळमळी चित्त । येई वो धांवत पांडुरंगे ॥२॥
 उपजली चिंता लागला उसीर । होत नाहीं धीर निढळ वाटे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पोटीं रिघालेंसे भय । करूं आतां काय ऐसें जालें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The teachings of the saints rest upon our heads. We are not meant to remain in this mortal world.

Therefore my chitta yearns greatly. Come running, O Panduranga.

Anxiety has arisen because of this delay; I feel no patience, and the wait seems naked and exposed. Says Tuka, fear has entered my belly. What shall I do now? Things have come to this.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The saints' teaching rests on our heads. We are not meant to stay in this dying world. So my mind churns and burns. Come running, O Panduranga. Worry has risen; the wait grows long. I find no patience; I feel bare and exposed. Tuka says: fear has entered my belly. What do I do now? It has come to this.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram takes the saints' teaching as a command carried on his head: this mortal world is no place to settle. That conviction makes him unable to rest, and his whole mind churns as he calls for Panduranga to come quickly. The delay itself becomes torment; he can find no patience and feels stripped and exposed in the waiting. He names plainly the fear that has lodged in his belly and the helplessness of not knowing what to do, so that longing for God is shown here as something closer to dread than to calm.

GATHA 2280

Longing and Separation

Longing, God will save His own

मराठी मूळ

काळावरि घालूं तरि तो सरिसा । न पुरतां इच्छा दास कैसे ॥१॥
 आतां नाहीं कांहीं उसिराचें काम । न खंडावें प्रेम नारायणा ॥२॥
 देणें लागे मग विलंब कां आड । गोड तरि गोड आदि अंत ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे होइल दुरुषणें निश्चिती । गाईन तें गीतीं ध्यान मग ॥४॥
 याजसाटीं असें योजिलें श्रीपति । संकल्पाचे हातीं सर्व जोडा ॥५॥
 परपीडे ज्याची जिह्वा मुंडताळे । यमदूत डाळे करिती पूजा ॥६॥
 तुका ह्मणे अंबऋषी दुर्योधना । काय झालें नेणां दुर्वासया ॥७॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If we battle against Time, he matches us blow for blow; how can we be servants when our desires are not fulfilled? There is no room for delay now; do not let our love be interrupted, O Narayana. If the gift must come, why this obstacle of postponement? If it is sweet, let it be sweet from beginning to end.

Says Tuka, once I have Your vision, certainty will come, and then I shall sing in meditation.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If we wrestle with Time, he matches us blow for blow. With our wish unmet, what kind of servant am I? There is no room for delay now. Do not break off Your love, Narayana. If the gift must come, why this obstacle of delay? If it is sweet, let it be sweet from start to end. Tuka says: with Your sight, certainty will come; then I shall sing You in song and meditation. For this, Shripati has arranged it so: by His will, everything is set in place. The one who harms others has his tongue cut off; the messengers of Yama honor that. Tuka says: do you not know what happened to Ambarisha, to Duryodhana, to Durvasa?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram first presses his case as a servant: against Time alone he is outmatched, and an unanswered servant is no servant at all, so he begs Narayana not to break off His love or postpone the gift. Once he has God's sight, he says, certainty and song will follow on their own. Then he widens out: it is Shripati who arranges all this, and by His will everything falls into place. He recalls the old pattern that those who harm others are punished while God shields His devotees, pointing to Ambarisha, Duryodhana, and Durvasa, asking whether we have forgotten how that turned out.

GATHA 2281

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, the fault-finder's spoiled mind

मराठी मूळ

हागिल्याचे सिंके वोणवा चि राहे । अपशकुन पाहे वेडगळ ॥१॥
 अत्यंत समय नेणतां अवकळा । येऊं नये बळा सिक धरा ॥२॥
 भोजनसमयीं ओकाचा आठव । ठकोनियां जीव कष्टी करी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे किती सांगों उगवून । अभाग्याचे गुण अनावर ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who recoils at the smell of dung sees ill omens everywhere; the foolish look for bad signs in everything. Those who do not know the proper time and occasion are overcome by disgrace; hold your composure and learn restraint.

Thinking of vomiting at mealtime spoils the jiva and makes one miserable. Says Tuka, how much more can I explain? The ways of the unfortunate are beyond control.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One who gags at the smell of dung sees omens everywhere; the fool hunts for bad signs. Not knowing the right time and place brings disgrace. Do not let it master you; learn restraint. Remembering vomit at mealtime fools the soul and makes it suffer. Tuka says: how much can I unravel and explain? The faults of the unlucky are past control.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing a mind ruined by its own squeamishness and superstition. The person who recoils at every foul smell starts seeing ill omens everywhere; the foolish go looking for bad signs in all things. His point is about timing and self-restraint: not knowing the fit time and place leads to disgrace, so do not let the impulse run away with you. The image of dwelling on vomit at the dinner table shows how this works, the obsessing itself spoils what is good and torments the person. The closing line is weary rather than scornful: such self-defeating habits, once entrenched, are hard to undo.

GATHA 2282

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the fuss-maker and God's order

मराठी मूळ

नारे तरि काय नुजेडे कोंबडें । करूनियां वेडें आघो दावी ॥१॥
 आइत्याचें साहे फुकाचा विभाग । विक्षेपानें जग ची थू करी ॥२॥
 नेमून ठेविला करत्यानें काळ । नल्हायेसें बळ करूं पुढें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देव साहे जाल्यावरी । असांग चि करी सर्व संग ॥३॥ ॥७॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even a hen will not sit still if you simply prod it; it makes a great fuss and display over nothing. It readily consumes what comes free and then makes a show of indignation.

The capable one has set a time and order; the incompetent wants to bathe ahead of his turn. Says Tuka, once God is on your side, He dispassionately orchestrates all connections.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If you simply poke it, will the hen not squawk? It acts crazy and makes a great show. It eats up what comes free, takes its share for nothing. Then with its fuss it spits at the whole world. The Maker has set the time in order. The one with no strength wants to push ahead in line. Tuka says: once God is on your side, He calmly arranges every connection.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is mocking a kind of person through the picture of a fussing hen: poke it lightly and it shrieks and makes a great display over nothing, while happily eating whatever comes free and then turning to scold the whole world. He sets against this the order set by the Maker, who has appointed each thing its proper time; the impatient and incapable man only wants to jump the queue. The lesson is to stop the noise and self-importance, because once God is truly on your side He quietly arranges every relation and outcome, without your forcing it.

GATHA 2283

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the carefree devotee

मराठी मूळ

तरी सदा निर्भर दास । चिंताआसविरहित ॥१॥
 अवघा चि एकीं ठाव । सर्व भाव विठ्ठलीं ॥२॥
 निरविलें तेव्हां त्यास । जाला वास त्यामाजी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे रूप ध्यावें । नाहीं ठावे गुणदोष ॥४॥
 वेडिया उपचार करितां सोहळे । काय सुख कळे तयासी तें ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Such a devotee is forever carefree, free of worry and desire. All his being is in one place; his entire devotion belongs to Vitthal.

Once surrendered, he finds his dwelling within God. Says Tuka, meditate on that form; there, merit and fault are unknown.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Then the servant is always full, free of worry and want. His one and only place is Vitthal; all his feeling rests there. Once he hands himself over, he finds his home within God. Tuka says: meditate on that form; there, merit and fault are unknown. The fool goes through the rites and shows; what joy in them does he understand?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing what surrender does to a person. The devotee who has given himself away is forever full and carefree, free of worry and craving, because all his feeling rests in one place, Vitthal. Once he hands himself over, he finds his very dwelling within God, where the bookkeeping of merit and fault no longer applies. The closing line cuts the other way: the fool who only performs the outward rites and shows tastes none of this joy, because the surrender, not the ritual, is what opens it.

GATHA 2284

Social Criticism

Social criticism, devotion without feeling

मराठी मूळ

अंधापुढें दीप नाचती नाचणें । भक्तिभावेविण भक्ति तैसी ॥१॥
 तिमाणें राखण ठेविलेलें सेता । घालुनियां माथां चुना तया ।
 खादलें ह्मणोनि सेवटीं बोंबाली । ठायींची भुली कां नेणां रया ॥२॥
 मुकियापासाव सांगतां पुराण । रोगिया मिष्टान्न काई होय ।
 नपुंसका काय करील पिद्वणी । रुचिविण वाणी तैसे होय ॥३॥
 हात पाय नाहीं करिल तो काई । वृक्षा फळ आहे अमोलिक ।
 हातां नये तैसा वांयां च तळमळी । भावेविण भोळीं ह्मणे तुका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What use is a feast set before a madman? How can a lamp serve one who is blind? Devotion without genuine feeling is just the same. A scarecrow is set to guard the field, with lime pasted on its head, yet it cries foul when the crop is eaten; why do you not recognize the original delusion? Telling the Puranas to a mute, giving delicacies to the sick, presenting a beautiful woman to a eunuch, or uttering words without relish: all yield nothing.

A tree bears priceless fruit, but if it cannot be reached, one only agonizes in vain. Says Tuka, the simple-minded without genuine feeling labor in vain.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A lamp dances before a blind man, dancing for nothing. Devotion without true feeling is just like that. A scarecrow is set to guard the field, lime smeared on its head. The crop is eaten, and at the end it cries out. Why do you not see the delusion in it from the start? Telling the Puranas to a mute, sweet food to a sick man, a beautiful woman to a eunuch, words spoken without relish: all of it yields nothing. The tree has priceless fruit, but it cannot be reached. So one only burns in vain. Tuka says: the simple-hearted without true feeling labor for nothing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is hammering one point through a string of images: action without inner feeling is wasted. A lamp shown to a blind man, a feast before the sick, the Puranas read to a mute, a scarecrow that guards nothing yet protests when the crop is gone, each is effort spent on something that cannot receive it. So too is devotion

performed without genuine feeling. The fruit may be priceless, but if you cannot truly reach for it you only agonize in vain. The sting is meant for self-examination: he is not despising the simple-hearted but warning that going through the motions, however earnest, bears no fruit unless real feeling is present.

GATHA 2285

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, test before you trust

मराठी मूळ

मेघवृष्टीनें करावा उपदेश परि गुरुनें न करावा शिष्य। वांटा लाभे त्यास केल्या अर्धकर्माचा ॥1॥

द्रव्य वेचावें अन्नसत्रीं भूतीं द्यावें सर्वत्र । नेदावा हा पुत्र उत्तमयाती पोसना ॥ध्रु॥

बीज न पेरावें खडकीं ओल नाहीं ज्याचे बुडखीं । थीतां ठके सेखीं पाठी लागे दिवाण ॥2॥

गुज बोलावें संतांशीं पत्नी राखावी जैसी दासी । लाड देतां तियेसी वांटा पावे कर्माचा ॥3॥

शुद्ध कसूनिपाहावें वरि रंगा न भुलावें । तुका ह्मणे घ्यावें जया नये तुटी तें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A guru should teach like rain falling everywhere, but should not make disciples recklessly. The disciple shares in the karma, whether good or ill.

Spend your wealth in feeding houses, give to all beings, but do not give your son to an unworthy person for upbringing. Do not sow seed on barren rock where there is no moisture at the root; those who persist there will be cheated in the end.

Share your innermost wisdom only with saints. Keep your wife like a servant in the household; if you indulge her, she claims a share of karma.

Test for purity first; do not be dazzled by surface color. Says Tuka, take only that which will not lead to loss.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A teacher should pour out teaching like rain falling everywhere. But a teacher should not take on a disciple carelessly. The disciple shares in the master's karma, the good and the half-done alike. Spend your wealth on feeding houses; give to all beings. But do not hand your son to an unworthy person to raise. Do not sow seed on bare rock where there is no moisture at the root. Those who keep trying there are cheated in the end, and the collector comes after them. Speak your innermost wisdom only to the saints. Keep your wife as you would a servant of the house; if you indulge her, she takes a share of the karma. Test for what is pure first. Do not be fooled by the color on the surface. Tuka says: take only what will not lead you into loss.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays down a string of warnings about where you invest your trust and your effort, all turning on one rule: discernment before commitment. Generosity should be wide, like rain, but a guru who accepts a disciple, or a parent who hands over a child, binds himself to that person's karma, so the choice must be careful. Sowing seed on bare rock stands for any effort poured where there is no inner readiness; it yields nothing and leaves you worse off. The harsh line about keeping a wife like a servant reflects a householder's caution of his era against indulgence that entangles you; the point under it is the same as the rest, that closeness shares consequence. His final test is the practical heart of the poem: look past the surface color to what is actually pure, and accept only what will not end in loss.

GATHA 2286

Prayers

Prayer, let nothing else attract me

मराठी मूळ

नावडावें जन नावडावा मान । करुनि प्रमाण तूं चि होई ॥१॥
 सोडुनि देहसंबंध वेसनें । ऐसी नारायणें कृपा कीजे ॥२॥
 नावडावें रूप नावडावे रस । अवघी राहो आस पायांपाशीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां आपुलिया सत्ता । करुनि अनंता ठेवा ऐसें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Let worldly people not be loved, let honor not be loved. May You alone become my standard and authority.**May the bonds and addictions of the body fall away. May Narayana grant such grace.**Let forms not attract me, let flavors not attract me; may all my longing rest only at Your feet. Says Tuka, now by Your own power, O Infinite One, keep me established in this state.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let me not love the crowd. Let me not love honor. Make Yourself the only measure I go by. Let the body's ties and addictions fall away. O Narayana, grant me this grace. Let no form attract me. Let no taste attract me. Let all my longing rest at Your feet. Tuka says: now by Your own power, O Infinite One, keep me settled like this.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a prayer to have the wrong attractions cut out at the root, one by one. Tukaram asks not to be moved by the approval of people or by his own honor, and instead to take God as his single standard for everything. He names the body's cravings and the pull of beautiful forms and pleasant tastes, and asks that the grip of each be loosened. The whole longing of his life is to be gathered up and laid at Vitthal's feet. The closing turn is the key: he admits he cannot hold this state by his own willpower, so he asks the Infinite to keep him fixed there by God's own power, not his.

GATHA 2287

Prayers

Prayer, make me free as crystal

मराठी मूळ

उपाधिवेगळे तुझी निविनकार । कांहीं च संसार तुझां नाहीं ॥१॥
 ऐसें मज करुनि ठेवा नारायणा । समूळ वासना नुरवावी ॥२॥
 निसंग तुझांसी राहणें एकट । नाहीं कटकट साहों येक ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं मिळों येत शिळा । रंगासी सकळा स्पटिकाची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You are free of worldly entanglement, O Narayana; You are beyond all modification. You have no worldly ties whatsoever.

Make me the same way; let not a single trace of desire remain. You dwell in solitary detachment; You cannot bear even a moment of commotion.

Says Tuka, a crystal cannot take on the color of any stone it is placed beside.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You are free of every entanglement. You are beyond all change. You have no worldly ties at all. Make me the same, O Narayana. Let not one trace of desire remain. You dwell alone, unattached. You cannot bear even a moment of commotion. Tuka says: a crystal cannot take on the color of any stone you set beside it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays to be made like the God he addresses: untouched, unchanging, free of every worldly tie. He asks that desire be removed completely, not merely managed, down to the last trace. The image of God dwelling alone and unable to bear commotion describes the stillness Tukaram wants to share. The closing simile carries the whole prayer: a true crystal stays clear no matter what colored stone is laid beside it, taking on no stain. He is asking to become that clear, so that the world's colors pass over him without dyeing him.

GATHA 2288

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the base nature

मराठी मूळ

माहार माते चपणी भरे । न कळे खरें पुढील ॥१॥
 वोंगळ अधमाचे गुण । जातां घडी न लगे चि ॥२॥
 श्वान झोळी स्वामिसत्ता । कोप येतां उतरे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे गुमान कां । सांगों लोकां अधमासी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The lowly one fills his pouch slyly when no one is looking; the future remains unknown. Such are the ways of the vile and base; they take less than a moment to fall.

A dog stays loyal only as long as the master's authority holds; when anger comes, loyalty fades. Says Tuka, why should I waste words telling the world about the nature of the wicked?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The base man slyly fills his pouch when no one is watching. What he will do next, no one knows. These are the ways of the low and the foul. They take less than a moment to fall. A dog stays loyal only while the master's power holds. When anger comes, the loyalty drops away. Tuka says: why should I waste words telling people about the nature of the wicked?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming a pattern of character rather than condemning a fixed class of people: the habit of grabbing in secret and serving only while it pays. Such a nature, he says, can collapse in an instant, because it was never grounded in anything real. The dog that stays loyal only as long as the master holds power is the picture of self-interest dressed up as devotion; when the wind turns, the loyalty is gone. His weary closing question, why bother spelling out the obvious, points the warning back at the listener: do not be the one whose constancy lasts only as long as it is convenient. The lesson is self-examination, not contempt.

GATHA 2289

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, keep the mind pure

मराठी मूळ

डोळ्यामध्ये जैसैं कणु । अणु तें हि न समाये ॥१॥
 तैसैं शुद्ध करीं हित । नका चित्त बाटवूं ॥२॥
 आपल्याचा कळवळा । आणिका बाळावरि न ये ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बीज मुडा । जैशा चाडा पिकाच्या ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Just as a tiny speck in the eye, even the smallest particle, cannot be tolerated, so too keep the mind pure for your own benefit. Do not let it be corrupted.

The concern one has for one's own child does not extend to another's. Says Tuka, the seed must be sound if you desire a good harvest.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A tiny speck in the eye, even the smallest grain, cannot be borne there. So keep your good purely; do not let your mind be defiled. The tenderness you feel for your own child does not reach another's child. Tuka says: the seed must be sound if you want the crop to ripen.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram argues that small impurities matter, because the inner life cannot tolerate even a little corruption, just as the eye cannot tolerate the tiniest speck. So the care you take of your mind should be exacting, keeping your good intentions clean rather than half-mixed with selfish ones. He notes plainly that natural love runs only toward your own, not toward a stranger's child, naming how partial and narrow ordinary feeling is. The closing farmer's image lands the point: only sound seed gives a real harvest, so only a pure inner motive can ripen into a genuine good. Guard the seed of the heart, and the fruit takes care of itself.

GATHA 2290

The Power of the Name

The Name, liberation in hand

मराठी मूळ

मुखीं नाम हातीं मोक्ष । ऐसी साक्ष बहुतांसी ॥१॥
 वैष्णवांचा माल खरा । तुरतुरा वस्तूसी ॥२॥
 भस्म दंड न लगे काठी । तीर्था आटी भ्रमण ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने आडकाठी । नाहीं भेटी देवाचे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

With the Name on the lips, liberation is in hand; many bear witness to this. The merchandise of the Vaishnavas is genuine; it holds its value against all goods.

No need for ash, staff, or walking stick; no need for the toil of pilgrimage to sacred places. Says Tuka, there is no obstacle in the way of meeting God through the Name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The Name on the lips, liberation in the hand. Many bear witness to this. The Vaishnavas' goods are genuine; they hold their value against everything. No need for ash, no need for staff or stick. No need for the toil of wandering to sacred places. Tuka says: there is no obstacle to meeting God by the Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes the bhakti claim in its sharpest form: speak God's Name and liberation is already in your grasp, and he says many devotees can testify to it. He treats the Name like genuine merchandise that keeps its worth no matter what it is weighed against, unlike the counterfeit value of religious display. Then he strikes out the props of conventional holiness one by one: the ascetic's smeared ash, the staff, the long pilgrimages to holy waters. None of these is required, and none stands between you and God. The whole point is that the way to God is unobstructed and available to anyone who will simply take the Name.

GATHA 2291

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, only His service matters

मराठी मूळ

आगी लागो तया सुखा । जेणें हरि नये मुखा ॥१॥
 मज होत कां विपत्ति । पांडुरंग राहो चितीं ॥२॥
 जळो तें समूळ । धन संपत्ति उत्तम कुळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने देवा । जेणें घडे तुझी सेवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let that comfort burn which keeps Hari from coming to one's lips. Even if calamity befalls me, may Panduranga remain in my chitta.

Let wealth, possessions, and noble lineage all burn to the ground. Says Tuka, O God, only that matters by which Your service is accomplished.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let that comfort burn which keeps Hari from coming to my lips. Let calamity fall on me; let Panduranga stay in my heart. Let it all burn down to the root: wealth, possessions, high birth. Tuka says: O God, only that counts by which Your service gets done.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures everything by a single test: does it bring Hari closer or push Him out? Any comfort that crowds the Name off his lips, he would rather see burned. He goes further and welcomes calamity itself, so long as Panduranga stays settled in his heart, because the loss of ease is nothing against the loss of God. Wealth, property, and the social pride of high birth all fall under the same flame; he wants them gone if they do not serve. The closing line states the rule directly: the only worth a thing has is whether it lets him serve God, and on that scale most of what people prize counts for nothing.

GATHA 2292

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, I enter Your embrace

मराठी मूळ

आतां न ह्मणे मी माझें । नेघें भार कांहीं ओझें ॥१॥
 तूं चि तारिता मारिता । कळों आलासी निरुता ॥२॥
 अवघा तूं चि जनादनन । संत बोलती वचन ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पांडुरंगा । तुझ्या रिगालों वोसंगा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now I shall not say 'mine' anymore. I shall not carry any burden or load.

You alone are the one who saves and the one who slays; this has become clear to me in truth. You are everything, O Janardana; the saints speak this very word.

Says Tuka, O Panduranga, I have entered into Your embrace.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now I will not say 'I' and 'mine.' I will not carry any burden or load. You alone are the one who saves and the one who slays. This has become clear to me in truth. You are everything, O Janardana. The saints speak this very word. Tuka says: O Panduranga, I have entered into Your embrace.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the moment of letting go. Tukaram drops the words 'I' and 'mine' and with them the whole weight of trying to manage his own life; he refuses to carry the load any longer. The reason is a settled conviction that God alone holds power over rescue and ruin, that whatever comes, saving or striking, comes from one hand. He confirms this against the testimony of the saints, who say the same: God is all there is. The poem ends not in argument but in rest, with Tukaram simply climbed into God's lap, the burden finally set down because Someone trustworthy is now holding it.

GATHA 2293

The Power of the Name

The Name, above all merit

मराठी मूळ

समुद्रवळ्यांकित पृथ्वीचें दान । करितां समान न ये नामा ॥1॥
 ह्यणऊनि कोणीं न करावा आळस । ह्यणा रात्रीदिवस रामराम ॥ध्रु॥
 सकळ ही शास्त्रें पठण करतां वेद । सरी नये गोविंदनाम एकें ॥2॥
 सकळ ही तीर्थो प्रयाग काशी । करितां नामाशीं तुळेति ना ॥3॥
 कर्वतीं कर्मरीं देहासी दंडण । करितां समान नये नामा ॥4॥
 तुका ह्यणे ऐसा आहे श्रेष्ठाचार । नाम हें चि सार विठोबाचें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even the gift of the entire ocean-girdled earth does not equal the Name. Therefore let no one be lazy about it; say 'Rama Rama' day and night.

Reciting all the scriptures and studying all the Vedas cannot compare with a single utterance of Govinda's Name. All pilgrimages, Prayag, and Kashi, none can match the Name.

Mortifying the body with austerities and penances cannot equal it. Says Tuka, such is the supreme practice: the Name of Vitthal alone is the essence.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Give away the whole earth ringed by the ocean, and it still does not equal the Name. So let no one be lazy about it. Say 'Rama Rama' night and day. Recite all the scriptures, study all the Vedas: it does not match one utterance of Govinda's Name. All the holy places, Prayag, Kashi: they do not weigh against the Name. Cut the body with saws, punish it with penances: it does not equal the Name. Tuka says: this is the highest practice. The Name of Vithoba alone is the essence.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram weighs the Name against the four great works of traditional religion and declares each one lighter. Giving away the entire ocean-girt earth, the supreme act of charity, does not match it. All scriptural recitation and Vedic study together do not match one saying of Govinda's Name. The most powerful pilgrimages, Prayag and Kashi, do not balance against it; neither do the harshest bodily austerities. By stacking the Name above gift, learning, pilgrimage, and penance in turn, he is not dismissing effort but locating the essence: the supreme practice is simply to say the Name of Vithoba, day and night, and not be lazy about the one thing that outweighs everything else.

GATHA 2294

*The Power of the Name**The Name in Kali, God beckons*

मराठी मूळ

अवघ्या वाटा झाल्या क्षीण कळीं न घडे साधन । उचित विधि विधान न कळे न घडे सर्वथा ॥१॥

भक्तिपंथ बहु सोपा पुण्य नागवया पापा । येणें जाणें खेपा येणें चि एक खंडती ॥२॥

उभारोनि बाहे विठो पालवीत आहे । दासां मी चि साहे मुखें बोले आपुल्या ॥२॥

भाविक विश्वासी पार उतरिलें त्यांसी । तुका ह्मणे नासी कुतक्यानचे कपाळीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In this age of Kali, all other paths have become exhausted; proper rites and rituals can neither be known nor performed. The path of devotion is exceedingly simple, the sure way to overcome sin by merit.

By this alone, the cycles of birth and death are ended. Vitthal stands with arms raised, beckoning His people, saying with His own mouth, 'I Myself will bear My devotees' burdens.' The faithful and trusting have been ferried across.

Says Tuka, destruction falls upon the heads of the cynics.

IN PLAIN WORDS

All the other roads have run thin. In this age of Kali no practice succeeds. The proper rites and rules cannot be known and cannot be done at all. The path of devotion is very easy, the sure way to overcome sin by merit. By this alone the comings and goings, the births and deaths, are cut off. Vittho stands with His arms raised, beckoning. He says with His own mouth, 'I Myself bear up My servants.' The faithful, the trusting, He has carried across. Tuka says: ruin falls on the head of the cynic.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram argues that the older religious roads have worn out in the present dark age, when the elaborate rites can no longer even be learned correctly, let alone performed. Against that, the path of devotion is deliberately easy and within reach, and it alone can break the cycle of birth and death. He pictures Vitthal not as distant but as actively waving His people in, arms open, promising in His own voice to carry His servants Himself. Those who simply trust have already been ferried across the flood of existence. The blunt closing warning is the other side of that mercy: the one who meets this open invitation with cynicism brings ruin on his own head, having refused the one hand reaching out.

GATHA 2295

*The Power of the Name**The Name, kicking aside liberation*

मराठी मूळ

आह्मीं नामाचें धारक नेणों प्रकार आणीक । सर्व भावें एक विठ्ठल चि प्रमाण ॥१॥
 न लगे जाणावें नेणावें गावें आनंदें नाचावें । प्रेमसुख घ्यावें वैष्णवांचे संगती ॥२॥
 भावबळें घालूं कास लज्जा चिंता दवडूं आस । पायीं निजध्यास ह्मणों दास विष्णूचे ॥३॥
 भय नाहीं जन्म घेतां मोक्षपदा हाणों लाता । तुका ह्मणे सत्ता धरूं निकट सेवेची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We are bearers of the Name; we know no other practice. With all our being, Vitthal alone is our authority.

There is nothing to learn or unlearn; simply sing and dance in joy. Take the bliss of love in the company of Vaishnavas.

With the strength of faith, gird your loins; cast away shame and idle worry. Keep your devotion fixed on His feet and call yourselves servants of Vishnu.

Says Tuka, there is no fear in taking birth again; we kick the seat of liberation aside and hold fast to the privilege of near service.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We are bearers of the Name. We know no other practice. With our whole heart, Vitthal alone is our authority. There is nothing to learn, nothing to unlearn. Just sing, just dance in joy. Take the bliss of love in the company of the Vaishnavas. With the strength of faith we gird our loins. We throw off shame and worry and hope. We fix our minds on His feet and call ourselves servants of Vishnu. We have no fear of taking birth again. We kick aside the seat of liberation. Tuka says: we hold fast to the privilege of close service.

WHAT IT MEANS

Speaking for the whole company of devotees, Tukaram describes a way of life that has stripped religion down to one thing: carrying the Name, with Vitthal as the only authority they recognize. They claim no doctrine to master and nothing to unlearn; the practice is to sing and dance in joy and to drink the love that flows in the gathering of the Vaishnavas. Bracing themselves with faith, they throw off the three things that usually rule people, shame before others, anxiety, and even hope, and simply call themselves servants. The most radical turn comes at the end: they are not afraid of being born again, and they actually kick aside the throne of liberation, the goal every other path chases. What they want instead is the nearness of serving God forever, and they value that closeness above release itself.

GATHA 2296

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, Hari's old companions

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी हरिचे सवंगडे जुने ठायींचे वेडे बागडे । हातीं धरुनी कडे पाठीसवें वागविलों ॥१॥
 ह्मणोनि भिन्न भेद नाही देवा आह्मां एकदेहीं । नाहीं जालों कहीं एका एक वेगळे ॥२॥
 निद्रा करितां होतों पायीं सवें चि लंका घेतली तई । वानरें गोवळ गाई सवें चारित फिरतसों ॥३॥
 आह्मां नामाचें चिंतन राम कृष्ण नारायण । तुका ह्मणे क्षण खातां जेवितां न विसंभों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We are Hari's old companions, His original playful comrades. He held our hands and carried us on His back.

Therefore there is no difference or division between God and us; we share one body. We have never at any time been separate from each other.

When we slept at His feet, we were with Him when Lanka was conquered. As monkeys and cowherds, we roamed with Him, grazing the cattle.

Our contemplation is the Name: Rama, Krishna, Narayana. Says Tuka, not for a single moment, eating or dining, do we forget Him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We are Hari's old friends, His playmates from the beginning, His simple fools. He took our hands and carried us on His back. So there is no division, no difference, between God and us. We are one body. We have never once been separate from each other. When we slept at His feet, we were with Him when Lanka was taken. As monkeys and as cowherds we roamed beside Him, grazing the cattle. Our one thought is the Name: Rama, Krishna, Narayana. Tuka says: not for a single moment, eating or dining, do we forget Him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from inside a felt oneness with God, claiming an old and easy companionship rather than a distant worship. Calling themselves Hari's longtime playmates and simple fools, the devotees describe a closeness so complete that there is no real separation left between God and them; they are, he says, one body that has never once been apart. He reaches back through Hari's own stories to show how far that companionship runs: present as the monkey army when Lanka was conquered with Rama, present as the cowherd boys grazing cattle with Krishna. The single thread holding it all is the Name, Rama, Krishna, Narayana, repeated through every story and every age. The closing line brings it down to the ordinary present: not even for a moment, not even while eating, do they let God slip out of mind.

GATHA 2297

Autobiography

The vow across births, joy that conquers death

मराठी मूळ

मार्गे बहुतां जन्मीं हें चि करित आलों आह्मी । भवतापश्रमी दुःखें पीडिलीं निववूं त्यां ॥१॥
 गजाँ हरिचे पवाडे मिळों वैष्णव बागडे । पाझर रोकडे काढूं पाषाणामध्ये ॥२॥
 भाव शुद्ध नामावळी हर्षो नाचों पिटूं टाळी । घालूं पायां तळीं किळकाळ त्याबळे ॥३॥
 कामक्रोध बंदखाणी तुका ह्मणे दिले दोन्ही । इंद्रियांचे धणी आह्मी जालों गोसांवी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Through many past births, this is what we have been doing. We cool those who are scorched by the heat of worldly suffering.

Let us proclaim Hari's heroic deeds, gathering the joyful Vaishnavas together. We shall draw living streams of water even from stone.

With pure minds and strings of the Name, let us sing, dance, and clap with joy. By that strength, we trample Death under our feet.

Says Tuka, lust and anger have both been thrown in prison. We have become the masters of our senses, true renunciants.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Through many past births, this is what we have been doing. People are scorched by the heat of worldly sorrow; we go to cool them. Let us sing aloud the great deeds of Hari. Let the glad Vaishnavas gather. We will draw living water even out of stone. With pure hearts and the string of the Name, let us sing, dance, and clap for joy. By that strength we set our feet on the neck of Death. Tuka says: lust and anger, both, we have thrown into prison. We are masters of our senses now. We have become true renunciants.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells us his work is old and chosen: birth after birth he comes to cool people burning in the fever of worldly pain, and the cooling is the singing of Hari's name with other devotees. The promise that they will draw water from stone names what this joy can do; nothing is too hard or too dead for the Name to soften. Clapping and dancing are not mere happiness here; they are the strength by which Death itself is trampled. The closing turn is the proof: lust and anger, the two jailers of the soul, are now the prisoners, and Tuka has become the owner of his senses rather than their slave. That is what he means by renunciation, not flight from the world but mastery within it.

GATHA 2298

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstatic dispute, I share what You are

मराठी मूळ

अमर तूं खरा । नव्हे कैसा मी दातारा ॥1॥
 चाल जाऊं संतांपुढें । वाद सांगेन निवाडें ॥ध्रु॥
 तुज नांव जर नाहीं । तर माझें दाव काई ॥2॥
 तुज रूप नाहीं । तर माझें दाव काई॥3॥
 खळसी तूं लीळा । तेथें मी काय वेगळा ॥4॥
 साच तूं लटिका । तैसा मी ही ह्मणे तुका ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You claim to be immortal. How am I not the same, O generous Lord? Come, let us go before the saints and have this dispute settled with a clear verdict.

If You have no name, then show me mine. If You have no form, then show me mine.

If You dissolve Your play, how am I separate from that? If You are both true and false, says Tuka, then so am I.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You are truly immortal. How then am I not the same, O generous Lord? Come, let us go before the saints. I will lay out the argument and let them judge. If You have no name, then show me where mine comes from. If You have no form, then show me where mine comes from. If You dissolve Your play, how am I anything separate from it? You are at once true and false, Tuka says: and so am I, just the same.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses a lover's argument all the way to identity. He challenges Vitthal: if You are deathless, beyond name, beyond form, then I have no separate name or form either, because I have nothing that did not come from You. He even offers to take the case before the saints for a verdict, the way two disputants would seek a judge. The point is not pride but surrender carried to its limit: there is no line where God ends and the devotee begins. Whatever can be said of God, true and false alike, the devotee shares, because the devotee has no being of his own apart from God.

GATHA 2299

*The Power of the Name**The Name, easy where everything else is hard*

मराठी मूळ

मंत्र चळ पिसें लागतें सत्वर । अबद्ध ते फार तरले नामें ॥1॥
 आशोचे तो बाधी आणिकां अक्षरां । नाम निदसुरा घेतां तरे ॥धु॥
 रागज्ञानघात चुकतां होय वेळ । नाम सर्वकाळ शुभदायक ॥2॥
 आणिकां भजना बोलिला निषेध । नाम तें अभेद सकळां मुखीं ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे तपें घालिती घालणी । वेश्या उद्धरुनि नेली नामें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A mantra, if performed incorrectly, can bring on madness quickly. But many who uttered the Name without discipline were saved.

Other syllables cause harm if spoken carelessly, yet one who takes the Name even in sleep is liberated. If melody, knowledge, or rhythm go wrong, there may be delay, but the Name is auspicious at all times.

Other forms of worship have prohibitions, but the Name may be spoken by all, without restriction. Says Tuka, austerities cause people to stumble and fall, but the Name alone uplifted even the courtesan.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A mantra said wrong brings madness, and quickly. Yet many who said the Name with no skill at all were carried across. Other syllables, said carelessly, do harm. But take the Name even half asleep, and you are saved. If the tune slips, or the knowledge, or the beat, there is only delay. The Name is good at every hour. Other worship has its rules and its forbidden things. The Name has no such bar; every mouth may speak it. Tuka says: austerities make people stumble and fall. The Name lifted up even the courtesan.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is contrasting the danger of the spiritual technologies with the safety of the Name. A mantra mispronounced, a rite done wrong, an austerity attempted, these can break the one who tries; they demand precision and earn punishment for error. The Name asks none of that: spoken badly, sleepily, by anyone at all, it still carries the speaker across. The stakes he is naming are who is allowed to come close to God. Where the rule-bound paths shut most people out and trip even the careful, the Name opens the door to everyone, which is why he points to the courtesan, the one the rules would exclude, as the very proof of its reach.

GATHA 2300

The Saints

What does not make a saint, the body-sense remains

मराठी मूळ

नव्हती ते संत करितां कवित्व । संताचे ते आप्त नव्हती संत ॥1॥
 येथें नाहीं वेश सरतें आडनांवें । निवडे घावडाव व्हावा अंगीं ॥ध्रु॥
 नव्हती ते संत धरितां भोंपळा । करितां वाकळा प्रावरण ॥2॥
 नव्हती ते संत करितां कीर्तन । सांगतां पुराणें नव्हती संत ॥3॥
 नव्हती ते संत वेदाच्या पठणें । कर्म आचरणें नव्हती संत ॥4॥
 नव्हती संत करितां तप तीर्थाटणें । सेविलिया वन नव्हती संत ॥5॥
 नव्हती संत माळामुद्रांच्या भूषणें । भस्म उधळणें नव्हती संत ॥6॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं निरसला देहे । तों अवघे हे सांसारिक ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who compose poetry are not saints thereby. The relatives of saints are not saints either.

Here, outward appearance and borrowed titles do not suffice; one must bear the mark of transformation in one's own being. Those who carry a gourd are not saints by that; those who wrap themselves in a blanket are not saints.

Those who perform kirtan are not saints on that account; those who recite Puranas are not saints. Those who chant the Vedas are not saints; those who perform rituals are not saints.

Those who practice austerities and pilgrimage are not saints; those who live in forests are not saints. Those who adorn themselves with rosaries and sacred marks are not saints; those who smear themselves with ash are not saints.

Says Tuka, so long as the body-sense has not been transcended, all such people are merely worldly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Writing poems does not make you a saint. Being a saint's relative does not make you one. Here a costume will not pass, nor a borrowed name; the mark of real change must be in you. Carrying a begging gourd does not make you a saint. Wrapping in a patched blanket does not. Performing kirtan does not make you a saint. Reciting the Puranas does not. Chanting the Vedas does not make you a saint. Doing rituals does not. Austerities and pilgrimage do not make you a saint. Living in the forest does not. Rosaries and sacred marks do not make you a saint. Smearing on ash does not. Tuka says: as long as the body-sense has not been worn away, all such people are still only worldly.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips away one badge of holiness after another, and the list is long on purpose. Poetry, lineage, kirtan, scripture, ritual, austerity, pilgrimage, prayer beads, ash, the whole visible inventory of a holy life, none of it makes a saint. The single test he gives is inward: has the sense of being a separate body and self been dissolved. Until that happens, every outer practice, however impressive, belongs to a worldly person playing a part. The poem is not contempt for these practices but a warning to look past the costume, including one's own, and ask whether the change is real.

GATHA 2301

Prayers

Prayer, only that I never forget You

मराठी मूळ

हें चि दान देगा देवा । तुझा विसर न व्हावा ॥१॥
 गुण गाईन आवडी । हे चि माझी सर्व जोडी ॥२॥
 न लगे मुक्ति आणि संपदा । संतसंग देई सदा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे गर्भवासी । सुखें घालावें आह्मासी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O God, grant me this one boon: may I never forget You. May I sing Your praises with love; this alone is my entire wealth.

I have no need for liberation or worldly prosperity; grant me the company of saints always. Says Tuka, even if You place us in the womb again, we shall go there happily.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Grant me just this one gift, God: that I never forget You. Let me sing Your qualities with love. This alone is all my wealth. I do not want liberation. I do not want riches. Give me the company of saints, always. Tuka says: if You must put us in the womb again, we will go there gladly.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram refuses the two prizes most people pray for, release from rebirth and worldly prosperity, and asks instead only that he never lose the memory of God. To sing God's praises with love is, he says, his entire fortune; he needs no other. The last line carries the stakes: he is so unconcerned with escaping rebirth that he will accept the womb again without complaint, as long as the love and the saints' company come with him. The whole prayer reverses the usual aim of religion. He is not asking to get out; he is asking only never to forget.

GATHA 2302

Faith and Trust

Faith, each receives by his own heart

मराठी मूळ

भाग्यवंता हे परवडी । करिती जोडी जन्माची ॥१॥
 आपुलाल्या लाहो भावें । जें ज्या व्हावें तें आहे ॥२॥
 इच्छाभोजनाचा दाता । न लगे चिंता करावी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आल्या थाऱ्या । वस्तु बऱ्या मोलाच्या ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This abundance belongs to the fortunate; they make the most of their birth. Each receives according to his own faith; whatever is meant for each, that is what comes.

God is the giver of whatever one desires; there is no need to worry. Says Tuka, precious things come to those who arrive at the right place.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This abundance belongs to the fortunate; they make a true gain of their birth. Each receives by his own faith; whatever is meant for someone, that is what comes to him. God gives the food each one desires. There is no need to worry. Tuka says: precious things come to the one who reaches the right place.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is saying that the spiritual harvest of a human life is real wealth, and it falls to those who know how to use the chance of being born. What each person draws from God is measured by the faith he brings; what is meant for him arrives, no more and no less. Because of that, anxiety is pointless: the Giver already provides what each truly desires. The closing line names the one condition, that you arrive at the right place, the company of God and the saints, where the precious things are kept.

GATHA 2303

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the stingy show-off

मराठी मूळ

वंचुनियां पिंड । भाता दान करी लंड ॥१॥
जैसी याची चाली वरी । तैसा अंतरला दुरी ॥२॥
मेला राखे दिस । ज्यालेपणें जालें वोस ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे देवा । लोभें न पुरे चि सेवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who starves his own body yet boasts of giving charity is shameless. As he struts on the surface, so deep is the distance he has created from God.

He observes death rites yet, in his living, has turned life desolate. Says Tuka, O God, greed ensures that true service can never be fulfilled.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He cheats his own body, then makes a loud show of giving charity; the shameless man. As his conduct is on the surface, so far has he fallen away inside. He keeps the rites for the dead, while his own living life has gone to waste. Tuka says: God, where there is greed, service is never complete.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram exposes the man who starves himself to look generous, who performs death-rites and public charity while his inner life is empty. The poem's edge is the gap between the polished outside and the distance from God within; the showy surface is exactly the measure of how far he has drifted. The sharpest line turns the rites against him: he honors the dead but has let his own living turn desolate. The lesson is aimed at the pattern of greed dressed as piety, a thing to watch for in oneself, because where greed remains, no act of service is ever truly finished.

GATHA 2304

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the anxious mind and the chataka bird

मराठी मूळ

अधीरा माझ्या मना ऐक एकी मात । तूं कां रे दुश्चत निरंतर ॥१॥
 हे चि चिंता काय खावें ह्मणऊनि । भले तुजहूनि पिक्षराज ॥२॥
 पाहा ते चातक नेघे भूमिजळा । वरुषे उन्हाळा मेघ तया ॥३॥
 सकळयातींमध्ये ठक हा सोनार । त्याघरीं व्यापार झारियाचा ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे जळीं वनीं जीव एक । तयापाशीं लेख काय असे ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O impatient mind, listen to this one thing. Why are you perpetually anxious? Your only worry is about what to eat.

The chataka bird is wiser than you, for it refuses ground water and waits for the rain cloud even through the hottest summer. Among all castes, the goldsmith is the greatest trickster, yet in his own home, the business runs on a sieve.

Says Tuka, creatures in water and forest have but a single life; what account book do they keep?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Restless mind of mine, listen to one thing. Why are you forever anxious? Your whole worry is only this: what will I eat. The bird is wiser than you. Look at the chataka: it will not touch water from the ground; it waits for the rain cloud right through the burning summer. Of all the trades, the goldsmith is the great cheat, yet in his own house the work runs through a sieve. Tuka says: a creature in the water, a creature in the forest, has a single life and no other; what account-book does it keep?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram scolds the anxious mind for spending all its strength on the one fear of where the next meal comes from. He holds up the chataka bird, which by legend drinks only rain from the cloud and refuses water on the ground, as the image of trust: it waits through the hottest season rather than grasp at the lower supply. The goldsmith, the cleverest cheat, still ends up with his gains slipping away through a sieve, so cunning buys no security. The wild creatures keep no ledger and yet are fed. The point is not to stop working but to stop the gnawing anxiety, since the One who feeds bird and beast is not going to forget you.

GATHA 2305

Faith and Trust

Faith, the One who feeds the whole world

मराठी मूळ

कां रे नाठविसी कृपाळु देवासी । पोसितो जनासी एकला तो ॥१॥
 बाळा दुधा कोण करितें उत्पत्ती । वाढवी श्रीपति सवें दोन्ही ॥२॥
 फुटती तरुवर उष्णकाळमासीं । जीवन तयांसी कोण घाली ॥३॥
 तेणें तुझी काय नाहीं केली चिंता । राहे त्या अनंता आठवूनि ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why do you not remember the compassionate Lord? He alone feeds the whole world. Who produces milk for the infant? Shripati nurtures both the child and the milk together.

Trees crack open in the scorching heat of summer; who waters them? Has He not taken care of you as well? Remain in the remembrance of that Infinite One. Says Tuka, He whose name is Vishvambhara, the Sustainer of all, meditate on Him always.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why do you not remember the merciful God? He alone feeds every creature. Who makes milk for the infant? Shripati raises both the child and the milk together. The trees split open in the heat of summer; who gives them water then? Has He not already taken thought for you too? Stay in remembrance of that Endless One. Tuka says: His name is Vishvambhara, the one who holds up all. Meditate on Him without stopping.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers worry with the plain evidence of providence. The same God brings milk into being for the newborn and raises the child to drink it; the same God waters the trees that crack in the dry heat when no one else can reach them. If care like that is at work everywhere, then it is already at work for you, and remembrance, not anxiety, is the right response. The name he ends on, Vishvambhara, the sustainer of all, is the whole argument in a single word. Because the One who carries the universe is carrying you, the only thing left to do is to keep your mind on Him.

GATHA 2306

The Nature of God

Nature of God, being all yet nothing

मराठी मूळ

उदारा कृपाळा पतितपावना । िब्रदें नारायणा साच तुझीं ॥1॥
 वणिनलासी जैसा जाणतां नेणतां । तैसा तूं अनंता साच होसी ॥ध्रु॥
 दैत्यां काळ भक्तां मेघश्याममूतिन । चतुर्भुज हातीं शंख चक्र ॥2॥
 काम इच्छा तयां तैसा होसी राणीं । यशोदेच्या स्तनीं पान करी ॥3॥
 होऊनि सकळ कांहींच न होसी । तुका ह्याने यासी वेद ग्वाही ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O generous One, O merciful Savior of the fallen, Your titles are true, O Narayana. As You have been described by the knowing and the unknowing alike, so You truly are, O Infinite Lord.

To demons You are Death; to devotees You appear as the dark-hued form, four-armed, bearing conch and discus. You take whatever form desire and devotion call forth; You nursed at Yashoda's breast.

Being everything, You are yet nothing at all. Says Tuka, the Vedas themselves bear witness to this.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Generous One, merciful One, savior of the fallen: these titles are truly Yours, Narayana. However the knowing and the unknowing have described You, that is what You truly are, O Endless One. To the demons You are Death itself. To devotees You come as the cloud-dark form, four-armed, conch and discus in Your hands. As desire and longing call for, so You become; You drank milk at Yashoda's breast. You have become everything, and yet You are nothing at all. Tuka says: to this the Vedas themselves bear witness.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram contemplates how God can be all the things people say of Him at once. The titles are true: He is generous, merciful, the rescuer of the fallen, and He is exactly as both the wise and the simple have pictured Him, because He meets each according to their seeing. To the demon He is destruction; to the devotee He is the beautiful child of Vrindavan who nursed at Yashoda's breast; He takes the very form that love and desire reach for. The deep claim is the last one: having become everything, He is in Himself nothing that can be pinned down, and Tukaram does not advance this on his own authority but says the Vedas testify to the same.

GATHA 2307

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the long catalogue of the true and the false

मराठी मूळ

ऐका संतजन उत्तरे माझे बोलबडे बोल । करीं लाड तुझांपुढें हो कोणी झणी कोपाल ॥1॥
 उपाय साधन आइका कोण गति अवगति । दृढ बैसोनि सादर तुझी धरावें चित्तीं ॥धु॥
 धर्म तयासी घडे रे ज्याचे स्वाधीन भाज । कर्म तयासी जोडे रे भीत नाहीं लाज ॥2॥
 पुण्य तें जाणां रे भाइनो परउपकाराचें । परपीडा परनिंदा रे खरें पाप तयाचें ॥3॥
 लाभ तयासी जाला रे मुखीं देव उच्चारी । प्रपंचापाठी गुंतला हाणी तयासी च थोरी ॥4॥
 सुख तें जाणा रे भाइनो संतसमागम । दुःख तें जाणारे भाइनो शम तेथे विशम ॥5॥
 साधन तयासी साधे रे ज्याची स्वाधीन बुद्ध । पराधीनासी आहे घात रे थोर जाण संबंधी ॥6॥
 मान पावे तो आगळा मुख्य इंद्रियें राखे । अपमानी तो अधररसस्वाद चाखे ॥6॥
 जाणता तयासी बोलिजे जाणे समाधान । नेणता तयासी बोलिजे वाद करी भूषण ॥8॥
 भला तो चि एक जाणा रे गयावर्जन करी । बुरा धन नष्ट मेळवी परद्वार जो करी ॥9॥
 आचारी अन्न काढी रे गाई अतितभाग । अनाचारी करी भोजन ग्वाही नसतां संग ॥10॥
 स्वहित तेणें चि केलें रे भूतीं देखिला देव । अनहित तयाचें जालें रे आणी अहंभाव ॥11॥
 धन्य जन्मा ते चि आले रे एक हरिचे दास । धिग ते विषयीं गुंतले केला आयुष्या नास ॥12॥
 जोहोरि तो चि एक जाणा रे जाणे सिद्धलक्षणें । वेडसरु तो भुले रे वरदळभूषणें ॥13॥
 बिळयाढा तो चि जाणा रे भक्ति दृढ शरीरीं । गांढण तयासी बोलिजे एक भाव न धरी ॥14॥
 खोल तो वचन गुरुचें जो गिळूनि बैसे । उथळ धीर नाहीं अंगीं रे ह्मणे होईल कैसें ॥15॥
 उदार तो जीवभाव रे ठेवी देवाचे पायीं । कृपण तयासी बोलिजे पडे उपाधिडाई ॥16॥
 चांगलेंपण तें चि रे ज्याचें अंतर शुद्ध । वोंगळ मिळन अंतरीं वाणी वाहे दुगपध ॥17॥
 गोड तें चि एक आहे रे सार विठ्ठलनाम । कडु तो संसार रे लक्षचौःयाशी जन्म ॥18॥
 तुका ह्मणे मना घरी रे संतसंगतिसोई । न लगे कांहीं करावें राहें विठ्ठलपायीं ॥19॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Listen, O saintly ones, to my stammering, childish words. I speak with the liberty of a child before you; let no one be angry.

Hear the means and the path; learn what leads upward and what leads to ruin. Sit firm and attentive and hold these truths in your chitta.

Dharma belongs to the one who has mastered the senses. Karma bears fruit for the one who has no fear or shame.

Know that true merit lies in helping others, while true sin is in harming others and slandering them. Profit belongs to the one who utters God's name; the one chasing worldly pursuits suffers great loss.

True happiness is the company of saints; true sorrow is where that company is absent. Spiritual practice succeeds for the one whose intellect is self-governed; the dependent one faces ruin in all dealings.

True honor belongs to the one who controls the senses; the sensual one earns only disgrace. The wise one is the one who knows contentment; the ignorant one argues for the sake of ornament.

The truly good one is the one who abandons what is harmful; the truly wicked one hoards ill-gotten wealth and enters others' homes. The righteous one cooks and gives a portion to the guest; the unrighteous one eats without witness or company.

Self-benefit belongs to the one who sees God in all beings; ruin comes to the one who carries the ego. Blessed are those births that produced servants of Hari; cursed are those who remain tangled in sense pleasures and waste their lives.

The truly discerning one knows the marks of perfection; the fool is dazzled by surface adornments. The truly brave one carries firm devotion in the body; the coward is the one who holds no single-pointed faith.

The deep one swallows the Guru's word and sits still with it; the shallow one has no patience and wonders how it will all work out. The generous one places body and jiva at God's feet; the miser is the one who falls into the pit of worldly strife.

True goodness is inner purity; the impure one is double-tongued inside. The only sweet thing is Vitthal's Name; bitter is this world of eighty-four hundred thousand births.

Says Tuka, O mind, go home to the company of saints. Nothing more needs to be done; simply remain at Vitthal's feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Listen, saintly ones, to my stammering, childish words. I play like a child before you; let no one be angry. Hear the means and the path. Learn what raises a man and what ruins him. Sit firm, sit attentive, and hold this in your heart. Dharma belongs to the one who has mastered his senses. Karma bears fruit for the one without fear or shame. Know, my brothers, that true merit is helping others; the real sin is to hurt others and slander them. Gain belongs to the one whose mouth speaks God's name; the one tangled in worldly affairs takes great loss. Know, brothers, that true happiness is the company of saints; true sorrow is where that company is not. Practice succeeds for the one whose mind is his own; for the one ruled by his cravings there is ruin, know this well. True honor goes to the one who guards his senses; the man given to the senses tastes only the bitter dregs of disgrace. Call him wise who knows contentment; call him a fool who argues to show off. Know the one good man: he leaves behind what is harmful. The bad man hoards ill-gotten wealth and breaks into others' homes. The decent one cooks and sets aside a portion for the guest; the indecent one eats alone, with no witness, no company. He has done himself good who has seen God in all beings; he has done himself harm who carries the ego. Blessed are the births that brought forth servants of Hari; shame on those tangled in the senses who throw their lives away. Know the true judge: he reads the marks of the perfected. The fool is dazzled by surface ornament. Know the strong man: devotion is firm in his body. Call him a coward who holds no single faith. The deep one swallows the Guru's word and sits still with it; the shallow one has no patience and frets, how will this ever turn out. The generous one lays his very life at God's feet; call him a miser who falls into the pit of worldly trouble. Goodness is just this: a heart that is pure. The foul one is double-tongued inside, his speech carrying filth. There is only one sweet thing: the essence, Vitthal's Name. Bitter is this world and its eighty-four lakh births. Tuka says: O mind, go home to the company of saints. Nothing else need be done. Just stay at Vitthal's feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a long teaching abhanga, and Tukaram begins by calling his words childish and stammering so the saints will hear him gently, not as a man lecturing them. What follows is a paired ledger of the true and the false in the spiritual life: dharma and merit go to the one who masters his senses, helps others, and speaks God's name, while ruin goes to the slanderer, the greedy, the self-displaying, the ego-bound. Again and again he separates the surface

from the substance, the man dazzled by ornament from the man who reads the real marks of perfection, the loud arguer from the quiet contented soul, the double-tongued from the inwardly pure. The single thread under every pair is this: what counts is the inner state, seeing God in all beings and holding firm devotion, not the outward show. He closes by collapsing the whole catalogue into one instruction, that the mind should go home to the saints and stay at Vitthal's feet, and nothing more is required.

GATHA 2308

Appeals and Exhortations

Alphabet exhortation, untangle the net of birth and death

मराठी मूळ

॥ येकाखडी ॥ 1॥

करावा कैवाड । नाही तरी आला नाड ॥1॥
 स्मरा पंढरीचा देव । मनीं धरोनिया भाव ॥ध्रु॥
 खचविलें काळें । उगवा लवलाहें जाळें ॥2॥
 घरटी चक्रफेरा । जन्ममृत्याचा भोंवरा ॥4॥
 नानाहव्यासांची जोडी । तृष्णा करी देशघडी ॥5॥
 चरणीं ठेवा चित्त । ह्मणवा देवाचे अंकित ॥6॥
 छंद नानापरी । कळा न पविजे हरी ॥7॥
 जगाचा जनिता । भुक्तिमुक्तींचा ही दाता ॥8॥
 झणी माझें माझें । भार वागविसी ओझें ॥9॥
 यांची कां रे गेली बिद्ध । नाही तरायाची शिद्ध ॥10॥
 टणक धाकुलीं । अवधीं सरती विठ्ठलीं ॥11॥
 ठसा त्रिभुवनीं । उदार हा शिरोमणि ॥12॥
 डगमगी तो वांयां जाय । धीर नाही गोता खाय ॥13॥
 ढळों नये जरी । लाभ घरिचिया घरीं ॥14॥
 नाही ऐसें राहे । कांहीं नासिवंत देहे ॥15॥
 तरणा भाग्यवंत । नटे हरिकीर्तनांत ॥16॥
 थडी टाकी पैलतीर । बाहे ठोके होय वीर ॥17॥
 दया तिचें नांव । अहंकार जाय जंव ॥18॥
 धनधान्य हेवा । नाडे कुटुंबाची सेवा ॥19॥
 नाम गोविंदाचें । घ्या रे हें चि भाग्य साचें ॥20॥
 परउपकारा । वेचा शक्ति निंदा वारा ॥21॥
 फळ भोग इच्छा । देव आहे जयां तैसा ॥22॥
 बरवा ऐसा छंद । वाचे गोविंद गोविंद ॥23॥
 भविष्याचे माथां । भजन न द्यावें सर्वथा ॥24॥
 माग लागला न संडीं । अळसें माती घालीं तोंडीं ॥25॥
 यश कीर्तिन मान । तरी जोडे नारायण ॥26॥
 रवि लोपे तेजें । जरी हारपे हें दुजें ॥27॥
 लकार लाविला । असतां नसतां चि उगला ॥28॥
 वासने चि धाडी । बंद खोडण नाडण बेडी ॥29॥
 सरतें न कळे । काय झांकियेले डोळे ॥30॥
 खंती ते न धरा । होणें गाढव कुतरा ॥31॥
 सायासाच्या जोडी । पिके काढियेल्या पेडी ॥32॥

हातीं हित आहे । परि न करिसी पाहें॥३३॥
 अळंकार लेणें । ल्या रे तुळसीमुद्राभूषणें ॥३४॥
 ख्याति केली विष्णुदासीं । तुका ह्मणे पाहा कैसी ॥३५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Remember the God of Pandhari, holding devotion in your chitta. If you do not make the effort, ruin will come.

Untangle quickly the net that darkness has cast. The spinning wheel of birth and death is a relentless whirlpool.

Various occupations and their accumulations only bring scattered wandering through craving. Fix your mind on His feet and call yourself God's own.

Indulging in many diversions and tricks will not lead you to Hari. He is the Father of the world, the Giver of both enjoyment and liberation.

Do not say 'mine, mine' and carry that heavy burden. Why has their wisdom departed? There is no awareness of what lies beyond.

Even the smallest of the small find fulfillment in Vitthal. His mark is upon the three worlds; this generous One is the crown jewel.

The wavering one goes to waste; without patience, he sinks. If you do not waver, the reward comes right to your door.

Nothing of this body endures; it is wholly perishable. The blessed one who revels in Hari's kirtan is truly fortunate.

He takes you from this bank to the far shore; strive hard and become a hero. Compassion means letting the ego go.

The craving for wealth and grain misleads; serving family becomes a trap. Take the Name of Govinda; this alone is true fortune.

Spend your strength in serving others; ward off slander. Fruit and pleasure come as God sees fit for each.

Let this be your cherished practice: sing Govinda, Govinda. Never yield your devotion into the hands of pretenders.

Once you begin, do not abandon the path; laziness only puts mud in your mouth. Fame, glory, and honor come through joining with Narayana.

If His light eclipses all else, then this duality disappears. Desiring nothing existent or non-existent leads to stillness.

It is desire itself that binds, in chains, ropes, and fetters. One cannot see the end through closed eyes.

Do not worry; otherwise you become an animal. The harvest of honest labor ripens from the cultivated field.

Welfare is in your own hands, yet you do not act. Wear the ornaments of tulsi beads and sacred marks.

Says Tuka, see the fame the servants of Vishnu have earned.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Remember the God of Pandhari; hold devotion in your heart. Make the effort, or ruin comes upon you. Darkness has trapped you; untangle the net at once. The household turns like a wheel, the whirlpool of birth and death. The pile of many cravings only scatters you, driven from place to place by thirst. Set your mind on His feet; call yourself God's own. With all your many amusements you will not reach Hari. He is the Father of the world, the Giver of both pleasure and release. Do not say 'mine, mine' and carry that weight as a burden. Why has their good sense left them? They have no clear thought of crossing over. Even the smallest of the small are made complete in Vitthal. His mark is on the three worlds; this generous One is the crown jewel. The wavering man is wasted; with no patience he sinks. If you do not waver, the gain comes home to your own door. Nothing of this body lasts; the body is wholly perishable. Blessed and fortunate is the young one who plays in Hari's kirtan. He throws you from this bank to the far shore; strike out with your arms and be a hero. Its name is compassion, the moment the ego goes. Greed for wealth and grain misleads; service of family becomes a snare. Take the Name of Govinda; this alone is the true fortune. Spend your strength helping others; drive off slander. Fruit and pleasure come to each as God sees fit. Let this be your good habit: on the tongue, Govinda, Govinda. Never hand your worship over to pretenders. Once you start, do not leave the path; laziness only fills your mouth with dirt. Fame, glory, honor come if Narayana is gained. As the sun blots out lesser lights, so this duality disappears. Wanting nothing, existent or non-existent, brings you to stillness. It is craving itself that binds you, in chains and ropes and fetters. You cannot see the end with your eyes shut. Do not grieve; otherwise you become a donkey, a dog. The harvest of honest labor ripens from the tended field. The good is in your own hand, yet look, you will not act. Put on the ornaments: tulsi beads, the sacred mark. Tuka says: see the fame the servants of Vishnu have won.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is an alphabet poem, a teaching strung verse by verse, and its single command is to remember the God of Pandhari and untangle yourself from the net of darkness before life runs out. Tukaram names the trap precisely: the spinning household, the whirlpool of birth and death, the scattering pull of many cravings, and above all the 'mine, mine' of the ego that loads you down. Against it he sets the cure, devotion fixed on Vitthal's feet, the Name of Govinda on the tongue, service of others in place of greed, and the patience not to waver. The stakes are stated bluntly: the body is perishable, the chance is now, and a wavering man simply sinks while the steady one finds the gain delivered to his own door. He ends by pointing to the devotees of Vishnu and the fame they have earned, as living proof that this path carries a person from this bank to the far shore.

GATHA 2309

Worldly Metaphors

Riddle, the taste known only by tasting

मराठी मूळ

देवें देऊळ सेविलें । उदक कोरडें चि ठेविलें ॥1॥
 नव्हे मत गूढ उमानें कांहीं । तूं आपणआपणापें पाहीं ॥ध्रु॥
 पाठें पूर वोसंडला । सरिता सागर तुंबोनि ठेला ॥2॥
 वांजेघरीं बाळ तान्हा । एक बाळी दों कानां ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे पैस । अनुभविया ठावा गोडीरस ॥4॥
 ॥ लोहागांवीं कीर्तनांत मेलें मूल जीत झालें ते समयीं स्वामींनीं अभंग केले ते ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God Himself has taken up residence in the temple, yet the water within remains dry. This is no secret to be guessed at; look within yourself.

Behind, the flood has surged and overflowed, filling the rivers and the sea. In the barren woman's home, a newborn cries, and one earring hangs from two ears.

Says Tuka, this sweetness of inner taste is known only to the one who has experienced it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God himself has come to live in the temple, yet the water there stays dry. This is no hidden thing you must guess at. Look within your own self. Behind, the flood has burst and overflowed; the rivers and the sea stand brimful. In the barren woman's house a newborn baby cries. One earring hangs from two ears. Tuka says: this is the wide open secret. The sweetness of the inner taste is known only to the one who has tasted it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is stacking up impossible images on purpose: a temple where God lives but the water is dry, a flood that fills the sea from behind, a child born to a barren woman, one earring on two ears. He is not posing puzzles to be solved by cleverness; he says plainly that there is nothing hidden here. The point is that the inner reality cannot be reached by guessing or argument; you have to turn and look within yourself. The contradictions break the grip of ordinary logic so that the real thing can be seen directly. And what is seen is a taste, not a theory: only the one who has actually experienced this sweetness knows what it is.

GATHA 2310

The Nature of God

Bold plea, show me your power now

मराठी मूळ

अशक्य तों तुझां नाहीं नारायणा । निर्जीवा चेतना आणावया ॥१॥
 मार्गे काय जाणों स्वामीचे पवाडे । आतां कां रोकडे दावूं नये ॥२॥
 थोर भाग्य आह्मी समर्थाचे कासे । ह्मणवितों दास काय थोडें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझे निववावे डोळे । दावूनि सोहळे सामर्थ्याचे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Nothing is impossible for You, O Narayana. You can bring life to the lifeless.

Who knows the past deeds of our Lord? But why not display them openly right now? It is great fortune that we are at the side of the Capable One. To call ourselves His servants, is that any small thing? Says Tuka, satisfy my eyes; show me the splendors of Your power.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Nothing is impossible for you, Narayana. You can bring life to the lifeless. I do not know your old deeds of long ago; why not show them to me right now, plainly? It is great good fortune that we hold to the side of the Capable One. To be called your servants, is that any small thing? Tuka says: cool my eyes; let me see the splendor of your power.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is asking God to act in the present, not only in legend. He grants that nothing is beyond Narayana, who can even revive the dead, and then presses the request home: the wonders of the past are hearsay to him, so let them be shown openly here and now. He counts it pure fortune to be on the side of the all-capable Lord and to be called his servant. The closing plea, cool my eyes with the sight of your power, is the prayer of someone who wants living proof, not stored-up reputation. According to the editorial note, the abhanga was composed when a child who had died during a kirtan at Lohagaon was restored to life.

GATHA 2311

The Saints

Saints, the only true giver

मराठी मूळ

दाता तो एक जाणा । नारायणा स्मरवी ॥१॥
 आणीक नासिवंतें काय । न सरे हाय ज्यांच्यानें ॥२॥
 यावें तयां काकुलती । जे दाविती सुपंथ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे उरी नुरे । त्याचे खरे उपकार ॥३॥
 अलंकापुरीं ब्राह्मण धरणें बसून बेताळीस दिवस उपवासी होता त्यास दृष्टांत
 कीं देहूस तुकोबापाशी जाणें. ब्राह्मण स्वामीपें आला त्याबद्दल अभंग ॥ ३१ ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The true giver is the one who inspires remembrance of Narayana. What use are perishable things that cannot last? One should beseech those who show the true path.

Says Tuka, the one whose help leaves nothing remaining to be done, his are the real blessings.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Know this: there is one true giver, the one who makes you remember Narayana. What use are other things that perish, things by which the ache is never eased? Go and beg from those who show you the good path. Tuka says: the one whose help leaves nothing left to be done, his are the real blessings.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is redefining who deserves to be called generous. The true giver is not the one who hands you perishable goods, which never end your deeper longing, but the one who turns you toward remembering God. So he says the thing worth begging for is the company of those who point out the right path, the saints. Their help is complete in a way no worldly gift is: it leaves nothing further to be done, because it settles the soul itself. The editorial note ties the verse to a brahmin who sat in protest-fast for forty-two days at Alandi and was told in a vision to go to Tukaram at Dehu.

GATHA 2312

Prayers

Prayer, the fallen leave it to you

मराठी मूळ

श्रीपंढरीशा पतितपावना । एक विज्ञापना पायांपाशीं ॥१॥
 अनाथां जीवांचा तूं काजकैवारी । ऐसी चराचरीं िब्रदावळी ॥२॥
 न संगतां कळे अंतरीचें गुज । आतां तुझी लाज तुज देवा ॥३॥
 आळकर ज्याचें करिसी समाधान । अभयाचें दान देऊनियां ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Lord of Pandhari, Savior of the fallen, I make one petition at Your feet. You are the Champion of the helpless; this is Your renown throughout creation.

You know the secret of every being without being told; now, O God, the responsibility is Yours. You give comfort and the gift of fearlessness to whoever makes a heartfelt plea.

Says Tuka, You are the player on both sides; if faith falters, then give courage to the mind.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Lord of Pandhari, purifier of the fallen, I lay one petition at your feet. You are the helper and champion of helpless souls; this is your renown through all that moves and does not move. You know the secret of the heart without being told; now, God, your honor is your own concern. To anyone who pleads from the heart you give peace and the gift of fearlessness. Tuka says: you are the one playing on both sides. If faith fails, then give my mind its courage.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram brings a single request and then quietly hands the whole burden back to God. He addresses Vitthal of Pandhari by his known title, savior of the fallen, and reminds him that his fame across all creation rests on rescuing the helpless. So, he reasons, since God already knows every secret of the heart, keeping that promise is now God's own affair, a matter of God's honor. The striking turn is at the end: he says God is the player on both sides, the one who gives the prayer and the one who answers it, so even his faltering faith is God's to repair. The prayer becomes total dependence: if I cannot hold steady, you steady me.

GATHA 2313

Prayers

Invocation, calling the names of the merciful

मराठी मूळ

अगा ये उदारा अगा विश्वंभरा । रखुमाईच्या वरा पांडुरंगा ॥1॥
 अगा सवौत्तमा अगा कृष्णा रामा । अगा मेघश्यामा विश्वजनित्या ॥ध्रु॥
 अगा कृपावंता जीवन तूं दाता । अगा सर्वसत्ता धरितया ॥2॥
 अगा सर्वजाणा अगा नारायणा । करुणवचना चित्त द्यावें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं अधिकार तैसी । सरती पायांपाशीं केली मागें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O generous One, O Sustainer of the world, O Husband of Rakhumai, O Panduranga. O Supreme One, O Krishna, O Rama, O dark-hued Creator of the universe.

O compassionate Giver of life, O Holder of all power. O All-knowing Narayana, lend Your ear to these words of sorrow.

Says Tuka, I do not have the proper qualifications, but I have settled myself at Your feet, as I have done before.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O generous one, O sustainer of the world, O husband of Rakhumai, Panduranga. O best of all, O Krishna, O Rama, O dark cloud-hued one, maker of the universe. O merciful one, giver of life, O holder of all power that upholds everything. O all-knowing Narayana, give your heart to these words of sorrow. Tuka says: I have no worthiness of my own, yet I have settled myself at your feet, as I have done before.

WHAT IT MEANS

This abhanga is almost entirely a litany of names, and the naming is itself the prayer. Tukaram calls on God as generous, as world-sustainer, as Rakhumai's husband Panduranga, as Krishna and Rama, as the dark-hued maker of all, as the giver of life who holds every power. Having gathered all these titles, he asks one thing: that the all-knowing Lord lend his attention to a grieving plea. The close is his constant note of humility: he claims no qualification, no merit that earns a hearing. He simply takes his old place at the feet of God and rests his case there.

GATHA 2314

Confession and Sin

Confession, an unworthy servant claimed anyway

मराठी मूळ

नव्हे दास खरा । परि जाला हा डांगोरा ॥१॥
 यासी काय करुं आतां । तूं हें सकळ जाणता ॥२॥
 नाहीं पुण्यगाठीं । जे हें वेचूं कोणासाठीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कां उपाधी । वाढविली कृपानिधी ॥४॥
 ऐसे आह्मी जाणों दास । ह्मणोनि जालों उदास ॥५॥
 तुह्मी दिला धीर । तेणें मन झालें स्थिर ॥६॥
 तुका ह्मणे आड । केलों मी हें तुझें कोड ॥७॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am not a true servant, yet this proclamation has been made. What can be done about it now? You know everything.

I have no store of merit to spend on anyone's behalf. Says Tuka, why have You increased this worldly complication, O Treasury of mercy? We know what it means to be Your servants; that is why we have become detached. You gave us courage, and thereby our minds became steady.

Says Tuka, I have stood in Your way; that was Your own playful wish.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am not a true servant, yet this announcement has gone out about me. What can I do about it now? You know all of it. I have no store of merit saved up; what would I spend, and on whose behalf? Tuka says: why have you piled up this trouble for me, treasury of mercy? This is how we have come to know what being your servants means; that is why we have grown detached. You gave me courage, and by that my mind grew steady. Tuka says: I got in your way; this was your own playful doing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram protests that his reputation as a devotee has outrun the truth of him; the name servant of God has been proclaimed about a man who feels he has not earned it. He owns that he has no hoard of good works to draw on, and asks, half complaining, why God would burden him with such a role. But the protest turns into surrender: it is precisely by being claimed as God's servant that he has learned what that means and let go of the world. He credits the steadiness of his mind not to himself but to the courage God gave him. In the end he calls his own resistance God's playful arrangement: even getting in the way was God's doing.

GATHA 2315

Longing and Separation

Longing, my tongue bolder than you

मराठी मूळ

काय मी जाणता । तुझांहुनि अनंता ॥१॥
 जो हा करुं अतिशय । कां तुझां दया नये ॥२॥
 काय तुज नाही कृपा । विश्वाचिया मायबापा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे वाणी । माझी वदे तुझांहुनि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What do I know more than You, O Infinite One? When I make this excess of effort, does compassion not stir in You? Do You lack mercy, O Mother and Father of the world? Says Tuka, my tongue speaks more boldly than You do.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What do I know, more than you do, Infinite One? When I strain this hard, why does compassion not stir in you? Have you no mercy, mother and father of the world? Tuka says: my tongue speaks more boldly than you do.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pressing God with a lover's complaint. He admits he knows nothing that the Infinite does not already know, so his hard effort is not about teaching God anything; it is about why God stays silent. He appeals to God as the mother and father of all the world and asks how such a parent can withhold mercy. The sharp last line turns the charge inward and outward at once: his own tongue is bolder in asking than God is in answering. It is the freedom of intimacy, complaining straight to the one he trusts.

GATHA 2316

Autobiography

Autobiography, a petitioner sent to the door

मराठी मूळ

काय ज्ञानेश्वरीं उणें । तिहीं पाठविलें धरणें ॥१॥
 ऐकोनियां लिखित । ह्युण जाणवली हे मात ॥२॥
 तरी जाणे धणी। वदे सेवकाची वाणी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ठेवा । होतां सांभाळावें देवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Was something lacking in Dnyaneshwar that he sent a petitioner to our door? Having heard it written, this matter has been brought to our notice. The Master knows; the servant's tongue merely conveys.

Says Tuka, when a treasure is placed in trust, it must be looked after, O God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Was anything lacking in Dnyaneshwar, that he should send a petitioner to my door? Hearing the writing, this matter was made known to me. The master knows; the servant's tongue only carries the word. Tuka says: when a treasure is placed in your trust, you must look after it, God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reacts with humble surprise that a seeker has been directed to him, as if on the authority of the great saint Dnyaneshwar, who surely lacks nothing himself. He is puzzled why such a one would be sent to his door. He deflects the credit immediately: the master, God, is the one who knows and acts; the servant only relays what he is given to say. The closing line hands the responsibility back to God: if a precious soul has been entrusted to me, then it is yours to keep safe, not mine to manage. The note marks this among verses tied to a brahmin's coming to Tukaram.

GATHA 2317

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, only a gatekeeper

मराठी मूळ

ठेवूनियां डोई । पायीं जालों उतराई ॥1॥
 कारण तें तुह्मीं जाणां । मी तराळ नारायणा ॥ध्रु॥
 प्रसंगीं वचन । दिलें तें चि खावें अन्न ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे भार । तुह्मी जाणां थोडा फार ॥3॥
 उपदेश अभंग ॥ 11 ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Having placed my head at Your feet, I have discharged my obligation. You know the reason, O Narayana; I am but a gatekeeper.

Whatever food was given at the occasion, that is what should be eaten. Says Tuka, You know whether the burden is great or small.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have laid my head at your feet, and so I have paid off my debt. You know the reason for it, Narayana; I am only a gatekeeper. Whatever word was given at the moment, that is the food I should eat. Tuka says: you know whether the burden is great or small.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes his discipleship as a debt discharged by one act: bowing his head at God's feet. He refuses any larger claim about himself, calling himself merely a gatekeeper, a doorman who lets others through rather than the master of the house. Living by whatever was given at the time is his image for trust: he takes what the moment provides as the only food meant for him, asking for nothing more. The close leaves the whole weight with God, who alone knows whether the load laid on this servant is heavy or light. The editorial note marks it as a verse of instruction.

GATHA 2318

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, take the plunge into the Name

मराठी मूळ

नको कांहीं पडों ग्रंथाचे भरीं । शीघ्र व्रत करीं हें चि एक ॥1॥
 देवाचिये चाडे आळवावें देवा । ओस देहभावा पाडोनियां ॥२॥
 उधाराचा मोक्ष होय नव्हे ऐसा । पतनासी इच्छा आवश्यक ॥3॥
 रोकडी पातली अंगसंगें जरा । आतां उजगरा कोठवरि ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे घालीं नामासाठी उडी । पांडुरंग थडी पाववील ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Do not burden yourself with the weight of scriptures. Take up this one swift vow alone.**For the sake of God, call upon God, emptying yourself of all body-consciousness. Salvation on credit, whether it comes or not, is uncertain, but the certainty of falling is guaranteed.**Old age has arrived in person, pressing against the body; how long will you keep vigil? Says Tuka, take the plunge for the sake of the Name; Panduranga will bring you safely to shore.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not get buried under the weight of scriptures. Take up this one swift vow alone. For the sake of God, call out to God, laying your body-feeling waste. Liberation on credit may come or may not; the falling is sure. Old age has already arrived, pressing against your body; how long will you stay watchful? Tuka says: leap in for the sake of the Name. Panduranga will carry you to the far shore.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram urges a tired seeker to stop piling up book-learning and to take one fast, single vow instead: call on God, for God's own sake, emptying out the sense of being only this body. He warns against trusting deferred results, salvation bought on credit, which may or may not arrive, while the downward pull of decline is guaranteed. He points to the present fact that old age is already here, pressing on the body, so the time for delay is gone. The remedy is not more striving but a plunge: throw yourself into the Name. He promises that Panduranga himself will see you across to the far shore.

GATHA 2319

True Worship

True worship, the fruit lies at the root

मराठी मूळ

नाही देवापाशीं मोक्षाचे गांठोळें । आणूनि निराळें घावें हातीं ॥1॥
 इंद्रियांचा जय साधुनियां मन । निविनषय कारण असे तेथें ॥धु॥
 उपास पारणीं अक्षरांची आटी । सत्कर्मा शेवटीं असे फळ ॥2॥
 आदरें संकल्प वारीं अतिशय । सहज तें काय दुःख जाण ॥3॥
 स्वर्गीच्या घायें विळवसी वांयां । रडे रडतियासवें मिथ्या ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे फळ आहे मूळापाशीं । शरण देवासीं जाय वेगीं ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God does not keep bundles of liberation in a separate storeroom to hand over to you. When the senses are conquered and the mind is purified, the state of desirelessness is found right there.

Fasting, feasting, and the toil of recitation bear fruit only through righteous action. Beware of excess in resolve and desire; know that whatever comes naturally is not suffering.

Why waste yourself grieving over wounds received in a dream, or weeping alongside another's tears that are all illusion? Says Tuka, the fruit lies at the root. Go quickly, take refuge in God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God keeps no bundle of liberation in a back room to bring out and hand to you. Master the senses and still the mind, and there itself is the cause: the state where no desire remains. Fasting, breaking fasts, the toil of reciting letters: such good acts bear fruit only in the end. Watch out for piling up too much resolve and craving; know that what comes naturally is no suffering. Why ruin yourself over a wound taken in a dream, or weep along with another's weeping that is all unreal? Tuka says: the fruit is right there at the root. Go quickly, take refuge in God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram corrects the idea that liberation is a separate object God stores up and then delivers to the deserving. It is not somewhere else: when the senses are won and the mind grows quiet, the desireless state is already present right there. He does not throw out fasting, feasting, and recitation, but he says their fruit comes only at the end and only when joined to right action, so they are not the heart of the matter. He warns that even spiritual effort can become a trap when resolve and craving are pushed too far, and he calls grief over illusory losses as foolish as weeping over a wound suffered in a dream. The whole pointing is inward and immediate: the fruit is at the root, so do not search far; take refuge in God now.

GATHA 2320

True Worship

True worship, the witness within

मराठी मूळ

तजिलें भेटवी आणूनि वासना । दाविल्याचे जना काय काज ॥१॥
 आळवावें देवा भाकूनि करुणा । आपुलिया मना साक्ष करीं ॥२॥
 नाहीं जावें यावें दुरुनि लागत । आहे साक्षभूत अंतरीचा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हा आहे कृपासिंधु । तोडी भवबंधु तात्काळक ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

That which was renounced, desire brings back again. What use is it to display renunciation to the world? Call upon God with genuine sorrow and make your own mind the witness.

You need not go anywhere far; God is the witness dwelling within. Says Tuka, He is an ocean of mercy; He breaks the bonds of worldly existence in an instant.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What you renounced, desire fetches back again. What is the use of parading your renunciation before people? Call out to God, pleading your sorrow, and make your own mind the witness. There is nothing to go to from far away; the witness lives inside your own heart. Tuka says: he is an ocean of mercy. He cuts the bonds of worldly existence in an instant.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram exposes the hollowness of renunciation done for show. Whatever you give up outwardly, desire quietly brings back, so display before other people proves nothing. The real work is private: cry out to God with honest sorrow and let your own mind be the witness of your truth, since there is no one else to fool. He insists you need not journey anywhere, because the witness is not far off; God already dwells within the heart. And this inner Lord is no harsh judge but an ocean of mercy who, the moment you genuinely turn to him, cuts the bonds of worldly existence at once.

GATHA 2321

The Necessity of Experience

Union, the Name dissolving difference

मराठी मूळ

गोविंद गोविंद । मना लागलिया छंद ॥१॥
 मग गोविंद ते काया । भेद नाहीं देवा तया ॥२॥
 आनंदलें मन । प्रेमें पाझरती लोचन ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आळी । जेवी नुरे चि वेगळी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the mind has caught the rhythm of 'Govinda, Govinda,' then the body itself becomes Govinda; there is no difference between God and that person. The mind is enraptured, and tears of love flow from the eyes.

Says Tuka, no trace of separation remains, as if it were a meal so satisfying that no hunger lingers.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Govinda, Govinda. My mind has caught the song of it. Then this body itself becomes Govinda. There is no difference between God and that one. The mind is full of joy. Tears of love run from the eyes. Tuka says: no separateness is left, the way hunger is gone after a full meal.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes what happens when the Name is no longer something the mind merely does but something the mind has become. Say Govinda, Govinda until the mind catches its rhythm, and the body that says it turns into what it names; the line between God and the devotee falls away. The sign of it is in the body itself: joy floods the mind and tears come without being summoned. He ends with a plain image: as a full meal leaves no hunger behind, this union leaves no trace of separation.

GATHA 2322

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, you become what you hold

मराठी मूळ

ज्याचें जया ध्यान । तें चि होय त्याचें मन ॥१॥
 ह्यणऊनि अवघें सारा । पांडुरंग दृढ धरा ॥२॥
 सम खूण ज्याचे पाय । उभा व्यापक विटे ठाय ॥३॥
 तुका ह्यणे नभा । परता अनूचा ही गाभा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whatever one meditates upon, the mind becomes that very thing. Therefore, resolve all matters by holding firmly to Panduranga.

His feet stand evenly upon the brick; He is the all-pervading One, standing on that single spot. Says Tuka, He is beyond the sky, yet the core of even the smallest atom.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever you meditate on, your mind becomes that very thing. So settle every matter; hold firmly to Panduranga. His feet stand level on the brick. He stands on that one spot, yet he fills everything. Tuka says: he is beyond the sky, and he is the core inside the smallest atom.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram states a law of attention and tells you what to do with it. The mind takes the shape of whatever it dwells on, so the choice of object is the whole game; he says fix it on Panduranga and let that settle everything else. He points to the paradox of the form he loves: Vitthal stands on a single brick at Pandhari with his feet set evenly, yet

that same one is all-pervading. Larger than the sky and smaller than the smallest atom, the God you can hold in one fixed image is the God who is everywhere at once.

GATHA 2323

True Worship

True worship, the Name above all rites

मराठी मूळ

पाहुनियां ग्रंथ करावें कीर्तन । तेव्हां आलें जाण फळ त्याचें ॥1॥
 नाहीं तरि वांयां केली तोंडपिटी । उरी ते शेवटी उरलीसे ॥ध्रु॥
 पढोनियां वेद हरिगुण गावे । ठावें तें जाणावें तेव्हां जालें ॥2॥
 तप तिर्थाटण तेव्हां कार्यसिद्ध । िस्थर राहे बुद्ध हरिच्या नामीं ॥3॥
 यागयज्ञादिक काय दानधर्म । तरि फळ नाम कंठीं राहे ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे नको काबाडाचे भरी । पडों सार धरीं हें चि एक ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Study the scripture and then perform kirtan; only then does the scripture bear its fruit. Otherwise, all the recitation was mere lip-beating, and the remainder stays unfinished.

Having recited the Vedas, one should sing the praises of Hari; only then is knowledge truly known. Austerity and pilgrimage reach their purpose only when the mind rests steadily in Hari's Name.

What are sacrifices, ceremonies, and acts of charity worth if the Name does not stay on one's lips? Says Tuka, do not get buried under the load of strenuous practices; hold on to this one essence alone.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Study the scripture, then sing kirtan; only then does the scripture bear fruit. Otherwise it was only beating your mouth, and the rest is left undone. Recite the Vedas, then sing the praises of Hari; only then is what you know truly known. Austerity and pilgrimage reach their purpose only when the mind rests steady in Hari's Name. What are sacrifices and ceremonies and charity worth if the Name does not stay on your lips? Tuka says: do not get buried under the load of hard practices; hold to this one essence alone.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is ranking the whole machinery of religion and putting one thing at the top. Reading scripture, reciting the Vedas, austerity, pilgrimage, sacrifice, charity: none of them is rejected, but each only bears fruit when it leads to and rests in the Name of Hari. Study that never becomes living praise is just lip-work, and effort without the Name stuck in the throat comes to nothing. The warning is against mistaking the load of practices for the goal. He tells you to drop the burden and keep the single essence, the Name.

GATHA 2324

Faith and Trust

Faith, eat and trust the Sustainer

मराठी मूळ

सुखें खावें अन्न । त्याचें करावें चिंतन ॥१॥
 त्याचें दिलें त्यासी पावे । फळ आपणासी फावे ॥२॥
 आहे हा आधार । नाम त्याचें विश्वंभर ॥३॥
 नाही रिता ठाव । तुका ह्मणे पसरीं भाव ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Eat your food happily and contemplate Him. What is given by Him returns to Him, and the fruit comes naturally to you.

This is the basis of all support; His very name is Vishvambhara, the Sustainer of all. Says Tuka, there is no empty place in existence; simply spread the cloth of faith.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Eat your food happily, and think of him. What he gives reaches back to him, and the fruit comes to you on its own. This is the one support. His name is Vishvambhara, who carries the world. Tuka says: no place is empty of him; just spread out your faith.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram offers a quiet trust that asks for no strain. Eat in peace and remember God while you do, because everything given comes from him and returns to him, and your own share arrives without your grasping for it. The ground of this ease is who God is: Vishvambhara, the one who sustains and carries the whole world. Since no place in existence is empty of him, the only thing asked of you is to open out your faith, like spreading a cloth to receive what is already being given.

GATHA 2325

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, drink the whole universe

मराठी मूळ

संकोचोनि काय जालासी लहान । घेई अपोशण ब्रह्मांडाचें ॥१॥
 करोनि पारणें आंचवें संसारा । उशीर उशिरा लावूं नको ॥२॥
 घरकुलानें होता पडिला अंधार । तेणें केलें फार कासावीस ॥३॥
 झुगारुनि दुरी लपविलें काखे । तुका ह्मणे वाखे कौतुकाचे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why have you contracted and made yourself small? Drink up the entire universe in one draft. Having broken your fast, rinse out this worldly life.

Do not delay any longer. The darkness of this small dwelling had caused great distress.

Fling it far away, hide it under your arm. Says Tuka, these are the wonders of divine play.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why have you shrunk and made yourself small? Drink the whole universe in one mouthful. Break your fast on it, then rinse this worldly life away. Do not put it off any longer. The darkness of this little house had made you very anxious. Fling it far, hide it under your arm. Tuka says: these are the wonders of divine play.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns on the soul that has cramped itself into smallness and dares it to its true size. Instead of cowering, swallow the entire universe in a single draft and use it to break a long fast, then rinse the whole worldly life out of your mouth, and do it now, without delay. The little dwelling whose darkness kept you anxious is the narrow self; he says throw it away, tuck it aside, be done with it. What looks like an impossible boast is really the playful largeness of God, in whom such reversals are wonders.

GATHA 2326

Autobiography

Autobiography, the toy and the teacher

मराठी मूळ

माझ्या बापें मज दिधलें भातुकें । ह्मणोनि कवतुकें क्रीडा करीं ॥१॥
 केली आळी पुढें बोलिलों वचन । उत्तम हें ज्ञान आलें त्याचें ॥२॥
 घेऊनि विभाग जावें लवलाहा । आलेति या ठाया आपुलिया ॥३॥
 तुका ज्ञानदेवीं समुदाय । करावा मी पाय येइन वंदूं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My Father has given me a toy; with delight I play with it. I made my demands, I spoke my words, and from that, supreme knowledge came.

Take your share and go swiftly to your own rightful place. Says Tuka, let Dnyanadeva gather his assembly. I shall come to bow at his feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My Father gave me a toy, so I play with it in delight. I made my demands, I spoke my words, and from that the highest knowledge came to me. Take your share and go quickly to your own place. You have come here to what is yours. Tuka says: let Dnyanadeva gather his assembly; I will come to bow at his feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as a child who was simply handed something to play with and finds that the play itself bore fruit. The Name, given by the Father, is the toy; out of nothing more than a child's demanding and a child's words came supreme knowledge, unearned and given. He invites others to take their own portion and go to their rightful place, the place that already belongs to them. At the close he bows to the lineage, vowing to come and lay his head at the feet of Dnyanadeva and the assembly of saints.

GATHA 2327

The Saints

Saints, the shoe stays on the foot

मराठी मूळ

ज्ञानियांचा गुरु राजा महाराव । ह्मणती ज्ञानदेव ऐसें तुह्मां ॥१॥
 मज पामरा हें काय थोरपण । पायींची वाहाण पायीं बरी ॥२॥
 ब्रह्मादिक जेथें तुह्मां वोळगणे । इतर तुळणें काय पुरे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नेणे युक्तीची ते खोलीं । ह्मणोनि ठेविली पायीं डोई ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Guru of the wise, King of kings, such is the title by which they call Dnyaneshwar. For a wretch like me, what is this greatness? A shoe belongs on the foot, and that is where it should remain.

When even Brahma and the other gods attend upon you as servants, what comparison can any lesser being offer? Says Tuka, I do not know the depths of subtle reasoning; that is why I have placed my head at His feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Guru of the wise, King of kings: that is what they call Dnyaneshwar. What is such greatness to a wretch like me? A shoe belongs on the foot, and on the foot it is rightly placed. Where even Brahma and the gods wait on you as servants, what comparison can any lesser one offer? Tuka says: I do not know the depths of subtle reasoning, so I have laid my head at his feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures the distance between himself and Dnyaneshwar and refuses to flatter himself across it. Dnyaneshwar is named Guru of the wise and King of kings; against that, Tukaram calls himself a wretch and uses a homely image, a shoe belongs on the foot, to keep himself in his proper low place. When even Brahma and the gods serve such a master, no lesser being can stand beside him as an equal. Not knowing the depths of subtle reasoning, he chooses the one move he can make: he lays his head at the saint's feet.

GATHA 2328

Autobiography

Humility, a child's crooked words

मराठी मूळ

बोलिलीं लेकुरें । वेडीं वांकुडीं उत्तरें ॥१॥
 करा क्षमा अपराध । महाराज तुह्मी सिद्ध ॥२॥
 नाहीं विचारिला । अधिकार म्यां आपुला ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ज्ञानेश्वरा । राखा पायांपें किंकरा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Like a child, I have spoken crooked and stammering words. Forgive my transgressions, O great lords, you who are perfected beings.

I did not first examine my own qualification. Says Tuka, O Dnyaneshwar, keep this humble servant at your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Like a child, I have spoken crooked, stammering words. Forgive my faults, O great lords, you who are perfected. I did not first weigh my own fitness. Tuka says: O Dnyaneshwar, keep this servant at your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks pardon for daring to speak at all before the perfected saints. He likens his own words to a child's crooked babble, knowing they are clumsy beside their greatness. His confessed fault is that he spoke without first measuring whether he was qualified to speak. Having admitted it, he does not withdraw but asks for the only place he wants: to be kept as a servant at Dnyaneshwar's feet, where unfitness is covered by the master's grace.

GATHA 2329

The Saints

Saints, the seed shows in the fruit

मराठी मूळ

काय तुम्ही जाणां । करुं अद्देर नारायणा ॥१॥
 तरी या लटिक्याची गोही । निवडली दुसरे ठायीं ॥२॥
 कळों अंतरीचा गुण । नये फिटल्यावांचून ॥३॥
 आणिलें अनुभवा । जनाच्या हें ज्ञानदेवा ॥४॥
 आणीक कोणी मिति । त्यांच्या चिंतनें विश्रांति ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do you think, O Narayana, that You can simply ignore us? Then let this falsehood be tested in another court. One's inner quality cannot be known until it has been fully proven.

Dnyanadeva brought this truth to the experience of the world. Others too have found peace through contemplation of such saints.

Says Tuka, the seed in the womb produces the same fruit at the end.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do you think, Narayana, that you can just turn us away? Then let this falsehood be tested in another court. The quality hidden inside cannot be known until it is fully proved. Dnyanadeva brought this truth into the world's own experience. Others too have found rest by contemplating such saints. Tuka says: the seed in the womb is the same as the fruit at the end.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses a near-legal claim on God and on the proof of true saints. He challenges Narayana, half in boldness, half in love: you cannot simply dismiss your devotees, and if you try, the case can be carried to another court. His point is that inner quality stays unknown until it is tested and proved in the open, and this is exactly what Dnyanadeva did, bringing the truth of God into the lived experience of ordinary people. Others have found peace by dwelling on such saints. The closing image seals it: what is hidden in the seed is what shows in the fruit, so a true saint's end reveals what was always within.

GATHA 2330

Worldly Life

Worldly life, the faithless seed

मराठी मूळ

अविश्वासीयाचें शरीर सुतकी । विटाळ पातकी भेद वाही ॥१॥
 काय त्याचे वेल जाईल मांडवा । होता तैसा ठेवा आला पुढें ॥२॥
 मातेचा संकल्प व्हावा राजबिंडा । कपाळीचें धोंडा उभा ठाके । तुका ह्मणे जैसा कुचराचा दाणा । परिपाकीं अन्ना
 न मिळे जैसा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The body of one without faith is impure from birth; he carries the taint of difference and defilement. How can his vine ever reach the canopy? Whatever he had stored up has come before him unchanged.

The mother's wish is that the child be handsome, but the stone written on the forehead stands firm. Says Tuka, such a one is like an unripe grain that, even after cooking, will never mingle with the rest of the food.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The body of one without faith is impure from birth; he carries the taint of division and sin. How can his vine ever reach the canopy? Whatever he had stored comes back to him unchanged. The mother may wish her child to be handsome, but the stone written on the forehead stands firm. Tuka says: he is like an unripe grain that, however long you cook it, will never blend with the rest of the food.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the condition of a life closed to faith, and the warning is meant to be turned on oneself, not used to despise a person. The one without faith carries division and stored-up wrongdoing from the start, so his growth never reaches the canopy; what he laid up returns to him unaltered. A mother's wish cannot rewrite what is written, the fixed bent of a hardened heart. The closing image is the sharpest: like a grain that stays raw no matter how long it is cooked, such a heart will not soften and mix in. The question it leaves is whether one's own faith is alive or hardened.

GATHA 2331

Social Criticism

Social criticism, austerity without God

मराठी मूळ

2327. तामसाचीं तपें पापाची सिदोरी । तमोगुणें भरी घातले ते ॥1॥
 राज्यमदा आड सुखाची संपत्ति । उलंघूनि जाती निरयगांवा ॥ध्रु॥
 इंद्रियें दमिलीं इच्छा जिती जीवीं । नागविती ठावीं नाहीं पुढें ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे हरिभजनावांचून । करिती तो सीण पाहों नये ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The austerities of the tamasic are only provisions of sin, filled and loaded by the quality of darkness. The pride of power and the comforts of kingship cause them to overstep all bounds and plunge into hell.

Even when the senses are subdued, if desire remains alive within, it deceives them, and no path lies ahead. Says Tuka, what they endure apart from the worship of Hari should not even be looked upon.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The austerities of the dark-natured are only a packed lunch of sin, loaded full by the quality of darkness. The pride of power and the comforts of kingship make them overstep all bounds and fall into hell. Even when the senses are subdued, if desire still lives inside, it robs them, and no path lies ahead. Tuka says: what they suffer apart from the worship of Hari is not worth even looking at.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram attacks a religion of effort that is hollow at the center, and the target is the pattern, not any single person. When austerity is done in the grip of tamas, it does not burn sin away but packs it as provisions for the road, and the pride of power and comfort drives such a one past all limits straight toward hell. Even outward control of the senses fails if desire stays alive inside; it quietly robs the practitioner and leaves no way forward. The test he offers is simple and worth turning on oneself: any discipline cut off from the worship of Hari is wasted toil, not worth a glance.

GATHA 2332

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, keep the right company

मराठी मूळ

हरिकथेवांचून इच्छती स्वहित । हरिजन चित्त न घला तेथें ॥1॥
 जाईल भंगोन आपुला विश्वास । होईल या नास कारणांचा ॥ध्रु॥
 ज्याचिया बैसावे भोजनपंगती । त्याचिया संगती तैसे खावें ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे काय जालेसि जाणते । देवा ही परते थोर तुम्ही ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who seek their own welfare without Hari's stories should not be given the company of Hari's devotees. Their own faith will break, and the means they rely upon will be destroyed.

One should eat only in the company of those at whose table one can sit without shame. Says Tuka, have you become so wise that you think yourselves greater even than God?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who want their own good without Hari's stories should not be given the company of Hari's devotees. Their own faith will break, and the things they depend on will be ruined. Eat only in the company of those at whose table you can sit without shame. Tuka says: have you grown so wise that you think yourselves greater even than God?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns about the company one keeps and where the heart is really aimed. Those who chase their own welfare while skipping the stories of Hari should not be set among Hari's devotees, because the mismatch breaks their faith and ruins the very supports they leaned on. He gives a homely rule: eat only where you can sit at the table without shame, that is, share life only with company that does not corrupt you. The closing question is aimed at the proud, and at the proud part of oneself: have you become so clever that you imagine you stand above God himself?

GATHA 2333

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the servant's place

मराठी मूळ

सेवकें करावें स्वामीचें वचन । त्यासी हुंतूंपण कामा नये ॥१॥
 घेईल जीव कां सारील परतें । भंगलिया चित्तें सांदी जनां॥२॥
 खद्योतें दावावी रवी केवीं वाट । आपुलें चि नीट उसंतावें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तो ज्ञानाचा सागर । परि नेंदी अगर भिजों भेदें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A servant should follow the master's command. Self-importance has no place in service.

Whether the Lord takes one's life or grants deliverance, one who is broken in spirit joins the crowd. A firefly cannot show the sun its way; one should simply keep one's own affairs in order.

Says Tuka, He is an ocean of knowledge, yet He does not let the pride of distinction wet even an edge.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A servant should do what the master says. There is no room for self-importance in service. Whether the Lord takes my life or pushes me away, a heart that breaks falls back into the crowd. A firefly cannot show the sun its road; let me just keep my own affairs in order. Tuka says: He is an ocean of knowledge, yet He does not let the pride of separateness wet even an edge of Him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out the whole logic of service in one stroke: the servant obeys, and self-importance has no place at all. He tests this against the hardest cases. If the Lord takes his life or shoves him away, the broken heart that protests has simply rejoined the ordinary crowd; true service does not bargain. The firefly trying to light the sun's path is his picture of the small self presuming to instruct God; better to keep one's own house in order and leave the rest to Him. He ends by naming the trap precisely: God is an ocean of knowing, and the pride that wants to be a separate, distinguished someone cannot so much as touch its edge.

GATHA 2334

The Saints

The saints, the master's house

मराठी मूळ

जयाचिये द्वारीं सोन्याचा पिंपळ । अंगीं ऐसें बळ रेडा बोले ॥१॥
 करील तें काय नव्हे महाराज । परि पाहे बीज शुद्ध अंगीं ॥२॥
 जेणें हे घातली मुक्तीची गवांती । मेळविली मांदी वैष्णवांची ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तेथें सुखा काय उणें । राहे समाधानें चित्ताचिया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

At whose door stands a golden Peepal tree and in whose being a bull speaks with strength, what can such a great one not accomplish? Yet he examines the seed for purity in his own body. He who laid the foundation of liberation and gathered the assembly of Vaishnavas, at his place, what joy can be lacking? Says Tuka, the mind rests there in perfect contentment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

At whose door a golden pippal tree stands, in whose body there is such power that a buffalo speaks: what can such a great one not do? Yet he looks for a pure seed in himself. He who marked out the courtyard of liberation and gathered the crowd of Vaishnavas: at his place, what could joy be lacking? Tuka says: there the mind rests in full contentment.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram praises a great master by his wonders and then turns the praise inward. He points to signs of power, a golden pippal at the door, a buffalo made to speak, and asks what such a one could not accomplish. Yet even he watches that the seed in his own being stays pure; greatness does not excuse self-examination. This is the one who opened the way to liberation and drew the company of Vaishnavas together, so at his place no joy is missing. The settled mind, Tuka says, finds its rest there and nowhere else.

GATHA 2335

Faith and Trust

Faith, guard your own ground

मराठी मूळ

बहुतां छंदाचें बहु वसे जन । नये वांटूं मन त्यांच्या संगें ॥१॥
 करावा जतन आपुला विश्वास । अंगा आला रस आवडीचा ॥२॥
 सुखाची समाधी हरिकथा माउली । विश्रांति साउली सिणलियांची ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बुडे बांधोनि दगड । तेथें काय कोड धांवायाचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The world is full of people with many whims; one should not scatter one's mind in their company. Guard your own faith; let the flavor of devotion permeate your being.

The bliss of Hari's story is like a mother, a cool shade for the weary. Says Tuka, one who dives with a stone tied to him drowns. What sense is there in rushing to join such a one?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The world is full of people with many whims. Do not scatter your mind in their company. Guard your own faith; let the taste of love soak into you. Hari's story is a mother, the bliss that is deep stillness, a cool shade for the weary. Tuka says: a man with a stone tied to him sinks. What sense is there in rushing to join him?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns against losing yourself to the crowd's countless moods. People are full of passing whims, and to mix your mind with theirs is to scatter it; instead, guard the one faith that is yours and let devotion's flavor soak in. He sets the alternative beside it: hearing Hari's story is a mother to you, a deep restful bliss, cool shade for the tired soul. Then comes the sharp image of the drowning man. Someone who has tied a stone to himself is going to sink, so there is no sense in running to keep him company; choose what holds you up, not what pulls you down.

GATHA 2336

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the deaf ear

मराठी मूळ

हरिकथे नाहीं । विश्वास ज्याचे ठायीं ॥१॥
 त्याची वाणी अमंगळ । कान उंदराचें बीळ ॥२॥
 सांडुनि हा रस । करिती आणीक सायास ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पिशीं । वांयां गेलीं किती ऐसीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who has no faith in Hari's story has a tongue that is impure. His ears are like the burrows of mice.

Abandoning this nectar, they pursue other vain endeavors. Says Tuka, how many such mad ones have gone to waste in this way.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one who has no faith in Hari's story: his speech is foul. His ears are a rat's hole. Leaving this nectar, they labor at other things. Tuka says: how many such mad ones have gone to waste this way.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures a person by one thing: whether the story of Hari has any place in them. Where that faith is missing, the speech turns foul and the ears are no better than a rat's burrow, openings that hear nothing of worth. Such people set aside the nectar that was right there and pour their effort into other, empty labors. He calls this madness and counts the cost: how many have simply gone to waste this way. The sting is aimed at the pattern of turning a deaf ear, not at hatred of any single person, and it asks the listener to check his own hearing.

GATHA 2337

The Power of the Name

The Name, the upward river

मराठी मूळ

प्रेम अमृताची धार । वाहे देवा ही समोर ॥१॥
उर्ध्ववाहिनी हरिकथा । मुगुटमणि सकळां तीर्था ॥२॥
शिवाचें जीवन । जाळी महादोष कीर्तन ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे हरि । इची स्तुति वाणी थोरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A stream of pure love, the nectar of devotion, flows even before God Himself. Hari-katha rises upward like a river flowing to the sky, the crown jewel of all sacred places.

Kirtan is the life-sustenance of Shiva; it burns away the greatest sins. Says Tuka, Hari Himself praises its glory; the tongue falls short in extolling it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A stream of the nectar of love flows, and it flows even before God Himself. Hari's story is a river that runs upward, the crown jewel of all holy places. Kirtan is Shiva's very life; it burns away the greatest sins. Tuka says: Hari Himself praises it; the tongue is too small for its greatness.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram exalts the singing of Hari's story above every other holy thing. Love pours out like a stream of nectar, and it flows toward God Himself; the story is a river that runs upward, against the ordinary downward pull, and so it crowns all places of pilgrimage. He calls kirtan the very life of Shiva and says it burns up even the gravest sins. The final turn is the boldest: Hari Himself praises this practice, and the human tongue is simply too small to measure its greatness.

GATHA 2338

Prayers

Prayer, may worship take hold

मराठी मूळ

आतां माझ्या मना । इची घडो उपासना ॥१॥
 ऐसें करीं पांडुरंगा । प्रेमवोसंडेसें अंगा ॥ ध्रु. ॥
 सर्व काळ नये । वाचेविट आड भये ॥२॥
 तुका वैष्णवांसंगती । हें चि भजन पंगती ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Now, O my mind, may this worship come to pass. O Panduranga, let love overflow from my very being.**May no weariness, revulsion, or fear come in the way at any time. Says Tuka, the company of Vaishnavas, that is my worship, my feast of devotion.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now, O my mind, may this worship come to pass. Panduranga, make it so love overflows from my body. Let no weariness, no disgust, no fear ever come in the way. Tuka says: the company of Vaishnavas, that is my worship, the feast where I sit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns to his own mind and prays that this worship of Hari's story actually take root in him. He asks Panduranga directly to make love overflow from his whole being, not as a mood but as something bodily and full. Then he names the obstacles he fears, the weariness, the revulsion, the dread that creep in over time, and prays that none of them ever block the way. He closes by saying where the worship happens: the company of the Vaishnavas is itself his devotion, the shared feast at which he takes his place.

GATHA 2339

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, no hunger for liberation

मराठी मूळ

उपास कराडी । तिहीं करावीं बापुडीं ॥१॥
 आह्मी विठोबाचे दास । चिंता झुगारावी आस ॥ ध्रु. ॥
 भक्तीच्या उत्कर्षा । नाहीं मुक्तीचें तें पिसें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्याने बळ । अंगीं आमुच्या सकळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Let the ascetics and the harsh practitioners make their severe penances. We are the servants of Vitthal; we cast away worry and worldly hope.**In the exaltation of devotion, we have no obsession with liberation. Says Tuka, all strength resides within us.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let the fasters and the harsh penance-doers do their poor severe deeds. We are Vitthal's servants; we throw away worry and craving. In the rising joy of devotion, we have no madness for liberation. Tuka says: all the strength is in us.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the bhakta's path against the path of grim self-mortification. Let the fasters and the hard ascetics keep at their severe practices; he calls them poor, pitiable things. Being Vitthal's servant, he simply flings away both worry and worldly craving, the two ends that usually drive a person. He goes further and refuses even the prize the ascetics chase: in the swelling joy of devotion there is no obsession with liberation, no fever for moksha. Strength is not earned by punishing the body; for those who belong to Vitthal, all of it already lives in them.

GATHA 2340

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the burden laid on God

मराठी मूळ

करविली तैसी केली कटकट । वांकडें कीं नीट देव जाणे ॥१॥
कोणाकारणें हें जालेंसे निर्माण । देवाचें कारण देव जाणे ॥२॥
तुका ह्मणे मी या अभिमाना वेगळा । घालुनि गोपाळा भार असें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whatever commotion has been caused, it was caused by His will. Whether it was crooked or straight, God alone knows.

For whose sake has all this creation been brought forth? God's purpose is known only to God. Says Tuka, I am separate from this ego. I have placed the entire burden upon Gopala and remain at rest.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever fuss has been made, it was made as He had it made. Crooked or straight, God knows. For whose sake all this was created, God knows the reason. Tuka says: I stand apart from this pride. I have laid the whole load on Gopala and I rest.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram hands every worry about outcomes back to God. Whatever commotion his life has stirred up was stirred as God moved it; whether it came out crooked or straight is for God alone to judge. He widens the question to the whole of creation, asking for whose sake it was made, and answers that only God knows the purpose. The point is release from the burden of being the doer. By stepping out of the pride that claims authorship, Tuka sets the entire load on Gopala's shoulders and lets himself rest.

GATHA 2341

Autobiography

Autobiography, the debt discharged

मराठी मूळ

तुम्ही येथें पाठविला धरणेकरी । त्याची जाली परी आइका ते ॥१॥
 आतां काय पुढें वाढवुनि विस्तार । जाला समाचार आइका तो ॥२॥
 देवाचें उचित एकादश अभंग । महाफळ त्याग करुनि गेला ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सेवा समपूर्नि पायीं । जालों उतराई ठावें असो ॥३॥ ॥३१॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You sent a petitioner here; hear what became of him. Now, without expanding the story further, hear the outcome.

As was fitting for God, eleven abhangas were composed; he departed having made the great sacrifice. Says Tuka, having offered my service at Your feet, I have discharged my debt. Let this be known.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You sent a man here to sit in demand at my door. Hear what became of him. Now, without stretching the story out, hear how it ended. As was right for God, eleven abhangas were made; he gave up the great prize and went away. Tuka says: having offered my service at Your feet, I have paid off my debt. Let this be known.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reports back to God about a man God had sent to him, someone who came and pressed his demand at the door. He keeps the account short, saying simply that he will tell how it ended rather than expand the tale. What he gave was fitting for God: eleven abhangas were composed, and the visitor, having let go of the greatest prize, departed. The closing line states the whole transaction plainly. By laying his service at God's feet, Tuka has cleared his debt, and he asks that this be on record.

GATHA 2342

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, death has died

मराठी मूळ

मरण माझें मरोन गेलें । मज केलें अमर ॥१॥
 ठाव पुसिलें बुड पुसिलें । वोस वोसलें देहभावा ॥२॥
 आला होता गेला पूर । धरिला धीर जीवनीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बुनादीचें । जालें साचें उजवणें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My death itself has died; I have been made immortal. All ground has been erased, all foundation dissolved; the sense of being a body has been emptied out.

The flood that had come has passed, and steadiness has been found in the waters of life. Says Tuka, the original foundation has been truly settled and celebrated.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My death itself has died. It has made me immortal. The ground is wiped away, the bottom is wiped away; the sense of being a body is emptied out. The flood that had come has passed; steadiness is found in the waters of life. Tuka says: the foundation has been truly settled and made bright.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing what happens when the fear of dying is itself undone. He says his own death has died, and that very ending has left him deathless. Every ground he once stood on, and the bottom under it, is wiped clean, and the deep conviction of being only a body is emptied out. The flood that had swept over him has now passed, and he has found steadiness in the very waters that once threatened to drown him. What he had as his base, Tuka says, is at last truly settled and lit up; the realization is complete.

GATHA 2343

Longing and Separation

Longing, God is dead to me

मराठी मूळ

माझे लेखीं देव मेला । असो त्याला असेल ॥१॥
 गोष्टी न करी नांव नेघें । गेलों दोघें खंडोनी ॥२॥
 स्तुतिसमवेत निंदा । केला घंदा उदंड ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे निवांत ठेलों । वेचित आलों जीवित्व ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In my reckoning, God has died. Let Him be whatever He may be.

I will not speak of Him, I will not take His name; both of us have parted ways and broken off. Along with praise, slander was dealt out abundantly.

Says Tuka, I have become still and quiet, having spent the currency of my entire life.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In my reckoning, God has died. Let Him be whatever He may be. I tell no stories of Him, I do not take His name; the two of us have broken off and parted. Praise and slander both, I dealt out plenty of that trade. Tuka says: I have gone quiet, having spent away my whole life.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is Tukaram speaking from the dry, severed side of longing, and the words are deliberately stark. He declares that as far as he is concerned God is dead, and lets Him be whatever He will; he will not tell the old stories or even take the Name, because the two of them have broken apart. He looks back on all his loud devotional business, the praising and the blaming alike, and counts it as so much trade he carried on at length. Now he has fallen silent, his whole life spent like coin paid out. The harshness is the cry of one who feels abandoned, not a rejection of God, and the silence is where it leaves him.

GATHA 2344

The Saints

The saints, where sorrow cannot live

मराठी मूळ

लवविलें तया सवें लवे जाती । अभिमाना हातीं सांपडेना ॥1॥
 भिळवेचें लेणें विष्णुदासां साजे । तेथें भाव दुजे हारपती ॥घु॥
 अर्चन वंदन नवविधा भक्ति । दया क्षमा शांति ठायीं ॥2॥
 तये गांवीं नाहीं दुःखाची वसती । अवघा चि भूतीं नारायण ॥3॥
 अव घें चि जालें सोंवळें ब्रह्मांड । विटाळाचें तोंड न देखती ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे गाजे वैकुंठीं सोहळा । याही भूमंडळामाजी कीतिन ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who bow, everything bows with them; pride cannot catch hold of them. The ornament of innocence suits the servants of Vishnu; there, duality and all other sentiments vanish.

Worship, prostration, the ninefold forms of devotion, compassion, forgiveness, and peace all dwell in that place. In that land, there is no dwelling for sorrow; Narayana is seen in all beings.

The entire universe has become pure; the face of pollution is never seen. Says Tuka, the celebration resounds in Vaikuntha, and its fame fills this earthly world as well.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one who bows, everything bows along with him; pride cannot get hold of him. The ornament of innocence suits the servants of Vishnu; there all other feelings vanish. Worship, bowing, the nine kinds of devotion, mercy, forgiveness, peace: all live in that place. In that town sorrow has no home; in every creature, only Narayana. The whole universe has turned pure; they never see the face of defilement. Tuka says: the festival resounds in Vaikuntha, and its fame fills this earth too.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the inner country of the true devotee. The one who truly bows finds that everything bows with him, and pride can no longer take hold; the simple ornament that suits Vishnu's servant is innocence, and in it all rival feelings dissolve. He lists what fills this place instead: worship, prostration, the ninefold devotion, and the moral fruits of mercy, forgiveness, and peace. Because the devotee sees only Narayana in every creature, sorrow can find no house there and defilement never shows its face; the whole universe has gone pure. Such a life, Tuka says, sets a festival ringing in Vaikuntha, and its fame spreads across this earth as well.

GATHA 2345

Devotion to Vitthal

Inner pilgrimage, the Name endures

मराठी मूळ

पंढरीची वारी आहे माझे घरीं । आणीक न करीं तीर्थव्रत ॥१॥
 व्रत एकादशी करीन उपवासी । गाइन अहनिनशीं मुखीं नाम ॥२॥
 नाम विठोबाचें घेईन मी वाचे । बीज कल्पांतीचें तुका ह्मणे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The pilgrimage to Pandhari is within my own home; I need no other sacred place or vow. I shall observe the Ekadashi fast and sing the Name day and night.

Says Tuka, I shall utter Vitthal's Name with my voice; that is the seed that endures through the final dissolution.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The pilgrimage to Pandhari is here in my own home. I need no other holy place, no other vow. I will keep the Ekadashi fast. I will sing the Name day and night. I will say Vithoba's Name with my own mouth. Tuka says: that is the seed that lasts till the end of all things.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram brings the pilgrimage indoors. The famous walk to Pandhari, the holy places, the vows: he sets them all aside, because the journey he means is the one he can make at home with his voice. What he keeps is the fast of Ekadashi and the constant singing of Vithoba's Name. He calls the Name the seed that endures through the final dissolution of the world, when every shrine and rite has been swept away. The claim is that the Name in the mouth outlasts the cosmos itself.

GATHA 2346

Longing and Separation

Longing for Pandhari, God waits

मराठी मूळ

संपदा सोहळा नावडे मनाला । करी तें टकळा पंढरीचा ॥१॥
 जावें पंढरिसी आवडी मनासी । कधीं एकादशी आषाढी हे ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसें आर्त ज्याचे मनीं । त्याची चक्रपाणी वाट पाहे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Wealth and festivity hold no appeal for my mind; it thinks only of Pandhari. The longing to go to Pandhari fills my mind.

When will the Ashadhi Ekadashi come? Says Tuka, Chakrapani Himself watches the road, waiting for the one whose mind carries such yearning.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Wealth does not please my mind. Festivals do not please it. It thinks only of Pandhari. My mind loves to go to Pandhari. When will the Ashadhi Ekadashi come? Tuka says: when this ache is in someone's mind, Chakrapani himself watches the road for that one.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures his longing against the things people usually crave. Riches and celebrations leave him cold; his whole mind leans toward Pandhari and counts the days to the Ashadhi Ekadashi. Then he turns the longing around. The one who aches like this is not chasing an absent God; God is the one who waits. Chakrapani, Vishnu of the discus, stands watching the road for the devotee whose heart carries that yearning, so the wanting itself is already answered from the other side.

GATHA 2347

True Worship

True worship, knowing is not living

मराठी मूळ

कथनी पठणी करुनि काय । वांचुनि रहणी वांयां जाय ॥1॥
 मुखीं वाणी अमृतगोडी । मिथ्या भुकें चरफडी ॥२॥
 पिळणी पाक करितां दगडा । काय जडा होय तें ॥३॥
 मधु मेळवूनि माशी । आणिका सांसी पारधिया ॥४॥
 मेळऊनि धन मेळवी माती । लोभ्या हातीं तें चि मुखीं ॥५॥
 आपलें केलें आपण खाय । तुका वंदी त्याचे पाय ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What use is mere recitation and study without living it? Without true practice, everything goes to waste. Sweet words on the tongue mean nothing if one still writhes in spiritual hunger.

No amount of grinding and cooking will make a stone edible. The bee gathers honey, but it is the hunter who takes it.

The miser hoards wealth and gathers only dust; what ends up in his mouth is the same dust. Says Tuka, only the one who acts upon what he knows truly reaps the reward; I bow at such a one's feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What use is reciting and studying? Without living it, it all goes to waste. Sweet words are on the tongue, but the false hunger still writhes inside. Grind a stone and cook it; it stays a stone. The bee gathers the honey, but the hunter takes it. The miser gathers wealth and gathers only dust; dust is all that reaches his mouth. Tuka says: the one who eats what he himself has made, I bow at his feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram aims this at the gap between knowing and doing. Recitation and study are worthless if you do not live them; honeyed words on the tongue do not feed a soul that is still starving. He stacks up plain images to drive it home: a stone stays inedible no matter how long you cook it, the bee that hoards honey only loses it to the hunter,

the miser ends with dust in his mouth. Read it as a question to put to yourself, not a verdict to throw at others. Only the one who acts on what he has learned truly reaps it, and to that one Tukaram bows.

GATHA 2348

*The Power of the Name**The Name in song, plain and tender*

मराठी मूळ

उमटती वाणी । वाटे नामाचिया ध्वनी ॥१॥
 बरें सेवन उपकारा । द्यावें द्यावें या उत्तरा ॥२॥
 सरळ आणि मृद । कथा पाहावी तें उर्ध्व ॥३॥
 गात जात तुका । हा चि उपदेश आइका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Words arise bearing the sound of the Name. This beneficial service should be offered generously, again and again.

The story should be seen as straightforward, gentle, and uplifting. Says Tuka, as I go about singing, listen to this one teaching.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Words rise up. They seem to carry the sound of the Name. Such service does good; offer these words, offer them again. Let the telling be straight and gentle, and let it lift the heart upward. Tuka says: as I go along singing, listen to this one teaching.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing what good speech about God should sound like. When words rise truly, they carry the ring of the Name in them, and to offer such words again and again is a service that benefits all who hear. He names the marks of it: the telling should be straightforward and gentle, and it should raise the listener rather than impress them. As he sings his way along, he asks people to take in this single teaching about how the holy story should be spoken.

GATHA 2349

True Worship

Conduct at kirtan, the proud listener

मराठी मूळ

कथाकाळींची मर्यादा सांगतो ते भावें वंदा । प्रीतीने गोविंदा हें चि एक आवडे ॥1॥
 टाळ वाद्या गीत नृत्य अंतःकरणें प्रेमभरित । वाणिता तो कीर्त तद्वावने लेखावा ॥ध्रु॥
 नये अळसें मोडूं अंग कथे कानवडें हुंग । हेळणेचा रंग दावी तो चांडाळ ॥2॥
 तोंडी विडा माने ताठा थोरपणे धाली गेंठा । चित्त नेदी नामपाठा गोष्टी लावी तो चांडाळ ॥4॥
 कथे इच्छी मान दावूनियां थोरपण रजा संकोच न लुगडी सांवरी तो चांडाळा ॥4॥
 आपण बैसे बाजेवरी सामान हरिच्या दासां धरी । तरि तो सुळावरि वाहिजे निश्चयेसीं ॥5॥
 येतां नकरी नमस्कार कर जोडोनियां नम्र । न म्हणवितां थोर आणिकां खेटी तो चांडाळ ॥6॥
 तुका विनवी जना कथे नाणावें अवगुणा । करा नारायणा ऋणी समर्पक भावें ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Hear the etiquette of the sacred gathering; I shall tell it, so receive it with devotion. What Govinda loves is this alone.

Cymbals, instruments, song, and dance; the inner being filled with love. One who sings should be honored according to his devotion.

Do not lazily stretch your limbs during the discourse or sniff about the kirtan with contempt. The one who shows disdain is a wretch.

The one who chews betel, sits proudly, swollen with self-importance, and lets his mind wander from the Name while engaging others in gossip is a wretch. The one who seeks honor at the discourse, making a display of his dignity, adjusting his garments instead of listening, is a wretch.

The one who sits on a cushion while making Hari's servants hold his belongings deserves to be put on the stake, in all certainty. The one who does not bow with folded hands when arriving, who does not call himself humble without being asked, and who walks over others, is a wretch.

Says Tuka, I implore the people: do not bring faults into the sacred gathering. Surrender to Narayana with whole-chitta devotion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will tell you the rule for the time of the discourse; receive it with devotion. This alone is what Govinda loves. Cymbals, instruments, song, dance, the heart full of love: honor the singer according to his devotion. Do not lazily stretch your body, and do not sniff at the kirtan with contempt; the one who shows scorn is base. The one who chews betel, sits stiff and swollen with self-importance, lets his mind drift from the Name and pulls others into gossip, is base. The one who hunts for honor at the discourse, who shows off his rank, who fusses with his clothes instead of listening, is base. The one who sits on a cushion and makes Hari's servants hold his belongings deserves the stake, for certain. The one who does not bow with folded hands when he comes, who will not call himself humble, who tramples over others, is base. Tuka says: I beg you, do not bring your faults into the gathering. Surrender to Narayana with a whole heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out the etiquette of the kirtan hall and what spoils it. The thing Govinda loves is the gathering done with full feeling: cymbals, song, dance, and a heart soaked in love, with the singer honored for his devotion and not his polish. Then he names the postures that ruin it: the bored body, the contemptuous sniff, the betel-chewing self-importance, the wandering mind that drags neighbors into gossip, the man who comes hunting status and fusses with his clothes, the grandee who sits on a cushion and treats God's devotees as porters. His sharp word base, and even the figure of the stake, is pointed at the pattern of pride, not at hating a person; the test he sets is whether you came to be honored or to surrender. He asks each listener not to carry such faults into the gathering, but to give themselves wholly to Narayana.

GATHA 2350

The Power of the Name

The Name, God stands in the telling

मराठी मूळ

कथा देवाचें ध्यान । कथा साधना मंडण । कथे ऐसें पुण्य आणीक नाहीं सर्वथा ॥१॥

ऐसा साच खरा भाव । कथेमाजी उभा देव ॥धु॥

मंत्र स्वल्प जना उच्चारितां वाचे मना । म्हणतां नारायणा क्षणें जळती महा दोष ॥२॥

भावे करितां कीर्तन तरे तारी आणीक जन । भेटे नारायण संदेह नाहीं ह्मणे तुका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Katha is meditation on God. Katha is the adornment of all spiritual practice.

There is no merit anywhere that compares with the merit of katha. Such is the true and honest reality: God stands present in the midst of katha.

Even a small mantra, when uttered by the tongue and mind, when one says 'Narayana,' burns away great sins in an instant. Says Tuka, when kirtan is performed with devotion, it saves the performer and saves others too. Narayana is met; there is no doubt about it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The telling of God's story is meditation on God. It is the ornament of all practice. There is no merit anywhere that equals it. This is the true and honest fact: God stands present in the midst of the story. Even a small mantra, when the tongue and mind say 'Narayana,' burns great sins away in a moment. Tuka says: kirtan done with love saves the one who does it and saves others too. Narayana is met; there is no doubt of it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram raises katha, the telling of God's story, above every other practice. To recite the story is itself meditation on God and the adornment of all sadhana, with no merit anywhere to match it, because God does not merely listen from far off; he stands present where the story is told. Even a brief utterance of 'Narayana,' said with tongue and mind together, burns away great sins in an instant. And kirtan done with real love is not a private gain: it carries across, saving the singer and the listeners alike, until Narayana himself is met.

GATHA 2351

The Power of the Name

The Name, katha as a holy confluence

मराठी मूळ

कथा त्रिवेणीसंगम देव भक्त आणि नाम । तेथींचें उत्तम चरणरज वंदितां ॥१॥
जळती दोषांचे डोंगर शुद्ध होती नारी नर । गाती ऐकती सादर जे पवित्र हरिकथा ॥२॥
तीथी तया ठाया येती पुनीत व्हावया । पर्वकाळ पायां तळीं वसे वैष्णवां ॥३॥
अनुपम्य हा महिमा नाहीं द्यावया उपमा । तुका ह्मणे ब्रह्मा नेणे वणूप या सुखा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Katha is the confluence of three sacred rivers: God, the devotee, and the Name. The dust of the feet at that place is supremely holy.

Mountains of sin are burned away, and men and women are purified, those who sing and those who listen with reverence to this holy Hari-katha. The sacred places themselves come to that spot to be sanctified.

The holiest hours of the calendar rest beneath the feet of the Vaishnavas. Says Tuka, this glory is beyond comparison; there is no metaphor adequate to describe it. Even Brahma cannot fully praise this bliss.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The telling of God's story is the meeting of three sacred rivers: God, the devotee, and the Name. The dust of the feet there is the most holy thing; honor it. Mountains of sin burn away, and women and men are made pure, who sing and who listen with care to the holy Hari-katha. The sacred places themselves come to this spot to be made clean. The holy hours of the calendar rest under the feet of the Vaishnavas. Tuka says: this glory has no equal; there is no image to compare it to. Even Brahma does not know how to praise this joy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram likens Hari-katha to a triveni, the confluence where three rivers meet, the three here being God, the devotee, and the Name. Where those three join, the very dust of the gathered feet is holier than any shrine. Singing and listening with reverence burns mountains of sin and purifies whoever takes part, so completely that the famous holy places and sacred hours come to be cleansed here rather than the other way around. He ends by confessing the limit of all praise: the glory has no comparison, and even Brahma, the creator, cannot find words equal to this bliss.

GATHA 2352

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, dance without shame

मराठी मूळ

सांझूनि कीर्तन न करीं आणीक काज । नाचेन निर्लज्ज तुझ्या रंगीं ॥१॥
 आवडीचें आर्त पुरवीं पंढरिराया । शरण तुझ्या पायां या चि लागीं ॥१॥
 टाळी वाहूनियां विठ्ठल ह्मणेन । तेणें निवारीन भवश्रम ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा नुपेक्षावें आह्मां । न्यावें निजधामा आपुलिया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Giving up everything else, I shall do nothing but kirtan. I shall dance without shame, lost in Your divine rapture.
 Fulfill the longing of my chitta, O Lord of Pandhari. I come to Your feet for this one thing alone.
 Clapping my hands, I shall cry 'Vitthal,' and by that I shall conquer the weariness of worldly existence. Says
 Tuka, O God, do not neglect us. Take us to Your own abode.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Leaving everything else, I will do nothing but kirtan. I will dance without shame in Your rapture. Fulfill the longing of my heart, O Lord of Pandhari. I come to Your feet for this one thing alone. Clapping my hands, I will cry 'Vitthal,' and by that I will drive off the weariness of this world. Tuka says: O God, do not neglect us. Take us to Your own home.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes his whole vocation a single act. He drops every other task and keeps only kirtan, ready to dance without shame because he is lost in the Lord's rapture, not minding how it looks. From Vitthal, the Lord of Pandhari, he asks one thing: that this longing be filled. The means is plain and bodily, hands clapping and the cry of 'Vitthal,' and he claims that this alone wears away the exhaustion of worldly existence. He closes by asking God not to overlook him but to carry him home to God's own abode.

GATHA 2353

The Power of the Name

The Name, kirtan as a war march

मराठी मूळ

जळती कीर्तनें दोष पळतील विघ्नें ॥१॥
 हें चि बिळवंत गाढें । आनंद करुं दिंडीपुढें ॥१॥
 किळ पापाची हे मूतिन । नामखड्ग घेऊं हातीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे जाऊं । बळें दमामे ही लावूं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Through kirtan, sins are burned and obstacles flee. This is the mightiest fortress of all.

Let us rejoice and march in procession before the dindi. Sin is the enemy in bodily form; let us take the sword of the Name in our hands.

Says Tuka, let us go forth boldly and sound the drums of triumph.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Kirtan burns sins; the obstacles flee. This is the mightiest fortress of all. Let us rejoice and march in front of the dindi. Sin is the enemy in bodily shape; let us take the sword of the Name in our hands. Tuka says: let us go forth boldly and sound the drums of triumph.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the devotional procession into a battle. Kirtan burns away sins and scatters every obstacle, so the singing band is itself the strongest fortress one could stand inside. He calls the company to rejoice and march at the head of the dindi, the pilgrim procession, as if to war. Sin is named the enemy in bodily form, and the Name is the sword carried in hand. The closing line is a war cry: go out boldly and beat the drums of victory, treating devotion not as retreat from the world but as an advance against what enslaves it.

GATHA 2354

The Power of the Name

The Name, Yama warns his messengers

मराठी मूळ

यम सांगे दूतां तुह्मां नाहीं तेथें सत्ता । जेथें होय कथा सदा घोष नामाचा ॥१॥
नका जाऊं तया गांवां नामधारकाच्या शिवां । सुदर्शन येवा घरटी फिरे भोंवती ॥२॥
चक्र गदा घेउनी हरि उभा असे त्यांचे द्वारीं । लक्ष्मी कामारी रिद्धिसिद्धीसहित ॥३॥
ते बिळयाशिरोमणी हरिभक्त ये मेदिनी । तुका ह्मणे कानीं यम सांगे दूतांचे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Yama tells his messengers: You have no authority where the Name is chanted in continuous devotion. Do not go near the boundaries of those who bear the Name.

The Sudarshana discus whirls around their homes like a sentinel. Hari stands at their door with discus and mace, accompanied by Lakshmi and all mystic powers.

They are the bravest heroes of this earth, the devotees of Hari. Says Tuka, Yama himself counsels his messengers to stay away.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Yama tells his messengers: you have no power there, where the story is told and the Name is always sounding. Do not go near the homes of those who bear the Name. The Sudarshana discus circles their houses, going around them on guard. Hari stands at their door with discus and mace, with Lakshmi and all the powers beside him. They are the bravest of all on this earth, the devotees of Hari. Tuka says: Yama himself says this in the ears of his messengers.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram dramatizes death's own helplessness before devotion. Yama, the lord of death, instructs his messengers that they hold no authority where God's story is told and the Name sounds without ceasing, and he warns them to stay clear of the homes of those who keep the Name. The reason is guarded plainly: the Sudarshana discus patrols their houses, and Hari himself stands at the door, armed and attended by Lakshmi and every mystic power. Such devotees are the true heroes of the earth, and the point is told from death's own mouth, so that the protection of the Name needs no other witness than Yama himself.

GATHA 2355

Krishna Leela

Krishna, the cry of the abandoned

मराठी मूळ

कान्हया रे जगजेठी । देई भेटी एकवेळे ॥१॥
 काय मोकलिलें वनीं । सावजांनीं वेढिलें ॥२॥
 येथवरी होता संग । अंगें अंग लपविलें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणें पाहिलें मागें । एवढा वेगें अंतरला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Krishna, Lord of the world, grant me Your darshan just once. Why have You released me in the forest, surrounded by wild beasts? Up to a point, You were with me.

Then You concealed Yourself, body behind body. Says Tuka, when I looked behind me, You had vanished at great speed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O Kanha, Lord of the world, give me Your meeting just once. Why have You left me in the forest, ringed by wild beasts? Until now You were with me. Then You hid Yourself, body behind body. Tuka says: when I looked behind me, You had slipped away so fast.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from the moment God seems to withdraw. He calls Krishna, the Lord of the whole world, and begs for a single meeting. The complaint is sharp: he feels abandoned in a forest of wild beasts, when only a moment ago God was at his side. He describes the loss in a startling way, as God hiding body behind body, then vanishing with great speed the instant Tukaram turned to look. The poem holds the experience of divine absence without softening it, the ache of one who knew nearness and now finds the place beside him empty.

GATHA 2356

Krishna Leela

Krishna, the lover's quiet plea

मराठी मूळ

आपुल्या आह्मी पुसिलें नाही । तुज कांहीं कारणें ॥१॥
 मागें मागें धांवत आलों । कांहीं बोलों यासाठीं ॥२॥
 बहुत दिस होते मनीं । घ्यावी धणी एकांतीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने उभा राहें । कान्हो पाहें मजकडे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have not asked about our own affairs because of You. I came running behind You; that is why I speak.

For many days this longing has been in my mind: to have my fill of You in solitude. Says Tuka, stand still, O Krishna, and look toward me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I did not ask about my own affairs; it was for Your sake. I came running behind You; that is why I speak. For many days it has been in my mind: to have my fill of You in solitude. Tuka says: stand still, O Kanha; look toward me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks in the tone of an intimate who has been chasing the beloved. He says he never came to settle his own business; he ran after Krishna for Krishna's own sake, and that is the only reason he is speaking now. The wish he has carried for many days is simple and tender: to be alone with God and take his fill of him. The poem ends not in a grand demand but in a small one, asking Krishna only to stop and turn and look at him, the whole longing pressed into a single glance.

GATHA 2357

Krishna Leela

The gopis, stealing away to God

मराठी मूळ

धन्य बा ह्या ऐशा नारी । घरीं दारीं नांदती ॥१॥
 चोरुनिया तुजपाशीं । येतां त्यांसी न कळतां ॥२॥
 दोन्हीं ठायीं समाधान । सम कठीण बहुतचि ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने जीवासाठीं । दुर्लभ भेटी ते देवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Blessed are those women who live as wives and householders, yet manage to steal away to You without their families knowing. To keep both spheres content at once is exceedingly difficult.

Says Tuka, for the sake of the jiva, the meeting with God is the rarest of all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Blessed are those women. They live in their homes as wives and keep their households. Yet they steal away to You, and their families never know they have gone. To keep both worlds content at once is very hard. Tuka says: for the sake of the soul, the meeting with God is the rarest thing of all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram blesses the gopis, who run two lives at once. In the house they are faithful wives and mothers; in secret they slip out to be with Krishna, and the household never finds out. He marks how hard this is, to keep the world satisfied and still keep the tryst. Then he names the stakes: of everything a soul could want, the meeting with God is the rarest. The hidden love is worth the difficulty, because nothing else is this scarce.

GATHA 2358

Krishna Leela

Rasalila, dissolving into Narayana

मराठी मूळ

उदासीना पावल्या वेगीं । अंगा अंगीं जडलिया ॥१॥
 वेढाळला भोंवता हरी । मयोरफेरीं नाचती ॥२॥
 मना आले करिती चार । त्या फार हा एकला ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नारायणीं । निराजनी मीनलिया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The indifferent gopis, once they arrived, clung to Him body to body. Hari was surrounded on all sides; they danced around Him like peacocks.

They did as they pleased, many against one. Says Tuka, these women have dissolved into Narayana, merged in that ultimate light.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The women who came indifferent are soon caught fast. Body clings to body. Hari is surrounded on every side; they dance around Him like peacocks circling. They do as their hearts please, many of them against the one. Tuka says: these women have melted into Narayana, merged into that one light.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram watches the rasalila and traces what happens to the soul that draws near God. The gopis come cool and detached, and at once they are gripped, body pressed to body, ringing Krishna on every side like peacocks at their dance. They have their way with the One who is alone among them. The point lands at the end: the many have dissolved into Narayana, merged into a single light. Drawing close in love is not finally keeping company; it is being absorbed into God.

GATHA 2359

Krishna Leela

Secret love, the open mind

मराठी मूळ

विशमाची शंका वाटे । सारिखें भेटे तरी सुख ॥१॥
 ह्मणऊनि चोरिलें जना । आल्या राणां एकांतीं ॥ध्रु॥
 दुजियासी कळों नये । जया सोय नाहीं हे ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे मोकळें मन । नारायण भोगासी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is fear that something may go wrong; joy comes only when equals meet. That is why they stole away from the world and came to the wilderness in private.

Others should not come to know of this, those who have no part in it. Says Tuka, when the mind is free and open, Narayana is there for the taking.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is a fear that something may go wrong. Joy comes only when equals meet. So they stole away from the crowd and came alone into the wilderness. Others must not find out, those who have no share in this. Tuka says: when the mind is free and open, Narayana is there to be had.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram explains why the gopis hide their love and what the hiding is really about. There is a fear of being seen, and joy is only sure when like meets like, so they slip away from the public into the lonely wilderness. The ones kept out are simply those with no part in this love. The closing line opens the frame: when the mind is unguarded and free, God is there for the taking. The secrecy is not shame; it is the clearing of the mind in which God can be met.

GATHA 2360

Krishna Leela

Union, the soul lost in its source

मराठी मूळ

आलिंगन कंठाकंठीं । पडे मिठी सर्वांगें ॥१॥
 न घडे मार्गे परतें मन । नारायण संभोगी ॥ध्रु॥
 वचनासी वचन मिळे । रिघती डोळे डोळ्यांत ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे अंतर्ध्यानीं । जीव जीवनीं विराल्या ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

An embrace, throat to throat, a clasp with the whole body. The mind cannot turn back when Narayana is in this intimate union.

Words merge into words; eyes enter into eyes. Says Tuka, deep in inner contemplation, the jiva has dissolved into its very life-source.

IN PLAIN WORDS

An embrace, throat against throat. The whole body clasps and holds. The mind cannot turn back, not when Narayana is the lover. Word meets word; eyes enter into eyes. Tuka says: deep in the inner stillness, the soul has dissolved into its very life.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures the union and lets it stand for the soul's meeting with God. There is a full embrace, throat to throat, the whole body holding on; once Narayana is the beloved, the mind has no way back. Speech answers speech, gaze sinks into gaze. The last line turns the embrace inward: in deep contemplation the jiva dissolves into Narayana, who is its own life-source. Closeness with God is not two staying two; the soul melts back into the ground it came from.

GATHA 2361

Krishna Leela

Scandal borne for love

मराठी मूळ

कोणी सुना कोणी लेंकी । कोणी एकी सतंता ॥१॥
 अवधियांची जगनिंद । जाली धिंद सारखी ॥२॥
 अवध्या अवध्या चोरा । विना वरा मायबापा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे करा सेवा । आलें जीवावर तरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Some were daughters-in-law, some were daughters, some were mothers of families. All of them alike were talked about by the world; equal scandal fell upon them all.

They were all alike in being thieves of love, apart from the one Beloved, their Mother and Father. Says Tuka, serve Him even if it costs your life.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Some were daughters-in-law, some daughters, some mothers of families. The world talked about every one of them; the same scandal fell on them all. They were all alike thieves of love, stealing toward the one Beloved, who is their Mother and Father. Tuka says: serve Him, even if it costs your life.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names the cost the gopis pay and tells the listener to pay it too. Whatever their place in the household, daughter, daughter-in-law, mother, the world gossiped about all of them equally. He calls them thieves, but what they steal toward is the one Beloved, who is parent to them all. The instruction at the end is blunt: serve God even at the price of your own life. The disgrace of the world is the ordinary cost of loving God openly, and it is worth paying.

GATHA 2362

Krishna Leela

One moment with God, beyond price

मराठी मूळ

येथील जें एक घडी । तये जोडी पार नाहीं ॥१॥
 ती त्यांचा सासुरवास । कैचा रस हा तेथें ॥२॥
 अवघे दिवस गेले कामा । हीं जन्मा खंडण ॥३॥ ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे रतल्या जनीं । सोडा झणी कान्होबा ॥३॥ ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A single moment here is worth more than any treasure. Their worldly homes are like a hard in-laws' house; what sweetness can be found there? All the days spent here have purified their very births.

Says Tuka, do not release these absorbed women, O Krishna.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A single moment here is worth more than any treasure. There is no end to that gain. Their worldly homes were like a hard in-laws' house; what sweetness was ever there? All the days spent here have made their very births clean. Tuka says: do not let these absorbed women go, O Krishna.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram weighs one moment of nearness to God against everything else and pleads for the gopis to be kept. A single moment here outweighs any treasure, and its gain is endless. Their ordinary homes were a hard place, like a bride's harsh in-laws' house, with no real sweetness in them. The time spent with Krishna has purified their whole existence. So he asks Krishna outright: now that they are absorbed in You, do not release them. The soul that has finally come home should not be sent back.

GATHA 2363

Ecstasy and Joy

The Name, wealth in every house

मराठी मूळ

चिंता नाही गांवीं विष्णुदासांचिये । घोष जयजयकार सदा ॥१॥
 नारायण घरीं सांठविलें धन । अवघे चि वाण तया पोटीं ॥२॥
 सवंग सकळां पुरे धणीवरी । सेवावया नारी नर बाळा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे येणें आनंदी आनंदु । गोविंदें गोविंदु पिकविला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In the village of Vishnu's servants, there is no anxiety. The sound of triumph resounds always.

Narayana's Name is the wealth stored in every home; all goods are contained within it. It is plentiful for all, enough for everyone, for women, men, and children to partake.

Says Tuka, in this joy upon joy, Govinda Himself has made Govinda's harvest bloom.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In the village of Vishnu's servants there is no worry. The shout of victory sounds there always. Narayana's Name is the wealth stored in every home; all goods are held inside it. It is cheap and plentiful, enough for everyone, for women, men, and children to take. Tuka says: in this joy upon joy, Govinda Himself has grown a harvest of Govinda.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the life of God's devotees as a place with no anxiety, where the cry of victory never stops. The treasure stocked in every house is the Name of Narayana, and every good thing is contained in it. Unlike worldly wealth it is cheap and abundant, freely available to all, women and men and children alike. The closing image makes the point complete: in this overflowing joy, God has raised a whole crop of Himself. The Name is a wealth that does not run out and that excludes no one.

GATHA 2364

Ecstasy and Joy

Kirtan, debts of many births cancelled

मराठी मूळ

करिती तया वेवसाव आहे । येथें व्हा रे साहे एकां एक ॥१॥
गातां आइकतां समान चि घडे । लाभें लाभ जोडे विशेषता ॥२॥
प्रेमाचें भरतें भातें घ्यावें अंगीं । नटे टाळी रंगीं शूरत्वेसी ॥३॥ ॥२॥
तुका ह्मणे बहुजन्मांचे खंडण । होइल हा सीण निवारोनि ॥३॥ ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who labor at this enterprise find support here. Let each one help the other.

Singing and listening both yield the same reward; gain upon gain accumulates abundantly. Wrap yourself in the garment of love and dance with clapping hands and the courage of a warrior.

Says Tuka, the debts of many births will be cancelled, and all suffering will be removed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who work at this enterprise find support here. So help one another, each of you. Singing and listening both earn the same reward; gain piles on gain. Wrap the flood of love around your body, and dance with clapping hands and a warrior's courage. Tuka says: the debt of many lives will be cancelled, and all this weariness lifted.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram calls the listener into the shared work of kirtan and names what it does. Those who labor at it are upheld, so he tells them to support each other. The reward is the same whether you sing or only listen, and it keeps accumulating. He urges the devotee to put on love like a garment and to dance with clapping hands, bold as a fighter. The payoff is the stake: the karmic debt of many births is wiped out and all suffering removed. Praise sung together, by singer and hearer alike, settles a debt no single act could.

GATHA 2365

Worldly Metaphors

The grain known at once, no toil

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं घाटावें लागत । एका सितें कळें भात ॥१॥
 क्षीर निवडितें पाणी । चोंची हंसाचिये आणी ॥२॥
 आंगडें फाडुनि घोंगडें करी । अवकळा तये परी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कण । भुसीं निवडे कैचा सीण ॥४॥
 स्वामीचें अभंगीचें नांव काढून सालोमालो आपलें नांव घालीत त्यावर अभंग ॥ ४ ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is nothing to prepare; a single grain shows the quality of the rice. The swan sifts milk from water with its beak alone.

Tearing a fine cloth to make a coarse blanket brings only ruin. Says Tuka, the grain separates from the chaff without any toil.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is nothing to prepare. One grain shows the quality of the whole rice. The swan separates milk from water with its beak alone. Tear a fine garment to make a coarse blanket, and you only ruin it. Tuka says: the grain falls clear of the chaff. Where is the labor in that?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says true worth shows itself plainly, with no effort and no faking. One grain tells you what the whole pot of rice is; the swan, by old image, draws milk out of water using only its beak. To shred something fine into something coarse is pure waste. The closing line ties it off: the good grain comes free of the husk on its own. Genuine quality declares itself and cannot be manufactured by struggle, and this sets up his attack on those who steal others' words to seem worthy.

GATHA 2366

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the plagiarist of saints

मराठी मूळ

सालोमालो हरिचे दास । ह्मणउन केला अवघा नास ॥१॥
 अवघें बचमंगळ केलें । ह्मणती एकांचें आपुले ॥२॥
 मोडूनि संतांचीं वचनें । करिती आपणां भूषणें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कवी । जगामधीं रुढ दावी ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

These imitators call themselves servants of Hari and thereby ruin everything. They have created a general mess, claiming the works of others as their own.

Breaking the words of the saints, they fashion ornaments for themselves from the fragments. Says Tuka, the poet reveals this fraud, which has become commonplace in the world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

These imitators call themselves servants of Hari, and so they ruin everything. They have made a general mess, claiming what others made as their own. They break the words of the saints and turn the pieces into ornaments for themselves. Tuka says: the poet shows up this fraud, which has become common all over the world.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram attacks the pattern of dressing up in borrowed holiness. Pretenders take the name servant of Hari while wrecking what that name means, and they pass off other people's work as their own. Worse, they break apart the saints' true words and wear the fragments as decoration for themselves. He says the poet's task is to expose this counterfeit, which has spread everywhere. The warning is to watch for the same theft in oneself: the urge to seem holy by quoting and claiming, instead of becoming what the words ask.

GATHA 2367

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the thief and his reward

मराठी मूळ

जायाचे अळंकार । बुडवूनि होती चोर ॥१॥
 त्यांसी ताडणाची पूजा । योग घडे बऱ्या वोजा ॥२॥
 अभिलाषाच्या सुखें । अंतीं होती काळीं मुखें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे चोरा । होय भूषण मातेरा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who steal a wife's ornaments become thieves. The fitting reward for them is a beating, and that is what destiny arranges.

In the pleasure of coveting, their faces turn black at the end. Says Tuka, the only ornament fit for a thief is dust.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who steal a wife's ornaments become thieves. The fitting worship for them is a beating; that is what fate arranges. In the pleasure of their coveting, their faces go black in the end. Tuka says: for a thief the only ornament is dust.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses the same charge, now in the figure of a jewel thief. To steal what is not yours makes you a thief, and the only honor such a one earns is the beating destiny brings him. The sweetness of grabbing what you covet ends in a blackened, disgraced face. The closing line strips the thief bare: the only ornament that suits him is dust.

Aimed at the borrower of holy words, it warns that stolen finery never adorns; it only exposes, and the wanting that drove it ends in shame.

GATHA 2368

Social Criticism

Social criticism, knowledge that is only noise

मराठी मूळ

कालवूनि विष । केला अमृताचा नास ॥१॥
 ऐशा अभाग्याच्या बुद्ध । सत्य लोपी नाहीं शुद्ध ॥२॥
 नाक कापुनि लावी सोनें । कोण अळंकार तेणें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे बावी । मोडूनि मदार बांधावी ॥३॥
 कण भुसाच्या आधारें । परि तें निवडितां बरें ॥
 काय घोंगालि पाधाणी । ताकामध्यें घाटी लोणी ॥२॥
 सुइणीपुढें चेंटा । काय लपविसी चाटा ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे ज्ञान । दिमाकाची भनभन ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Mixing poison into nectar destroys its value. Such is the intellect of the unfortunate, suppressing truth without awareness.

Cutting off the nose and replacing it with gold; what kind of adornment is that? Says Tuka, one who demolishes a well to build a tomb. The grain depends on the chaff, yet when you sift, they separate.

How does one churn butter from buttermilk without a churning rod? You cannot hide your tricks before a midwife. Says Tuka, such knowledge is nothing but the buzzing of arrogance.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Mix poison into nectar and you destroy it. Such is the mind of the wretched, hiding the truth and never clean. Cut off the nose and fasten on a gold one. What ornament is that? Tuka says: he is one who pulls down a well to build a tomb. The grain rests on the chaff, yet sift them and they part cleanly. How will you churn butter from buttermilk with no churning rod? You cannot hide your tricks in front of a midwife. Tuka says: such learning is only the buzzing of conceit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up images for false, stolen, ruined wisdom. To drop poison into nectar wrecks it; the corrupt mind buries the truth and stays unclean. A gold nose on a cut-off face is no ornament; tearing down a well to raise a tomb is no gain. Then he turns to what cannot be faked: chaff and grain look joined but sift apart, and you cannot churn butter out of mere buttermilk, just as a midwife sees through every concealment. The closing verdict is flat: this kind of learning is nothing but the buzzing of arrogance. The pattern to examine is the impulse to pass off appearance for substance, which any clear eye will catch.

GATHA 2369

Social Criticism

Social criticism, false goods exposed

मराठी मूळ

विकल तेथें विका । माती नांव ठेवूनि बुका ॥१॥
 हा तो निवाड्याचा ठाव । खऱ्या खोट्या निवडी भाव ॥२॥
 गऱ्हावारे हा विधि । पोट वाढविलें चिंधीं ॥३॥
 लावूं जाणे विल्हे । तुका साच आणिक कल्हे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Sell your wares where they are valued. Do not rename mud as sacred powder.**This is the place of final reckoning, where truth is sifted from falsehood. The swaddling cloth of pretense has only fattened the belly with rags.**Says Tuka, I know how to set the true apart from the false; the genuine from the counterfeit.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sell your wares where they are valued. Do not rename mud as sacred powder. This is the place of final reckoning. Here the true is sifted from the false. The swaddling cloth of pretense has only fattened the belly with rags. Tuka says: I know how to set the true apart from the false, the genuine apart from the counterfeit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is warning the religious pretender and naming the test he cannot pass. He tells the fraud to take his goods to a market that does not see clearly; here, in the company of those who know God, mud cannot be passed off as the powder used in worship. He calls this the place of final reckoning, where truth is sorted from falsehood by the heart's real disposition. The outward costume of piety, he says, only feeds the belly with rags, with nothing of worth inside. Tuka claims for himself the discernment to tell the counterfeit from the genuine, so the disguise will not work on him.

GATHA 2370

Social Criticism

The hollow Advaitin, desire unmasks the claim

मराठी मूळ

विषयीं अद्वये । त्यासी आह्मां सिवो नये ॥१॥
 देव तेथुनि निराळा । असे निष्काम वेगळा ॥२॥
 वासनेची बुंधी । तेथें कैची ब्रह्मिस्थिति ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे असतां देहीं । तेथें नाही जेमेतीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who claims oneness with the Absolute while indulging the senses should not be touched by us. God stands apart from such a one, dwelling in desirelessness.

Where desire wraps itself around like a cloak, how can there be any state of Brahman-realization? Says Tuka, as long as one dwells in the body in such a manner, liberation is nowhere to be found.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One who claims oneness with the Absolute while indulging the senses, we should not touch. God stands apart from such a one. God dwells in desirelessness, separate from him. Where desire wraps itself around like a cloak, how can there be any state of Brahman? Tuka says: as long as one lives in the body in this way, liberation is nowhere to be found.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns on the person who talks of nondual realization while still feeding every appetite, and refuses him fellowship. The point is not the theory but the life: God lives where there is no craving, so the indulgent talker has placed himself far from God by his own conduct. Desire wrapped around a person like a cloak leaves no room for the state of Brahman he boasts of. Tukaram lands it plainly: while a man lives in the body in that double way, claiming the heights and serving the senses, liberation is simply not there. The poem asks the listener to examine whether his own life matches his words.

GATHA 2371

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, one God and the sifting of grain

मराठी मूळ

नमितों या देवा । माझी एके ठायीं सेवा ॥१॥
 गुणअवगुण निवाडा । हौस हौस रेडा रेडा ॥२॥
 जनीं जनादनन। साक्ष त्यासी लोटांगण ॥३॥ ॥४॥
 तुका हणणे खडे । निवडू दळणीं घडघडे ॥३॥ ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I bow to this one God. My devotion belongs to a single place.

Let merit and fault be sorted out: a buffalo is a buffalo, and a bull is a bull. Janardana dwells among the people; to Him I offer full prostration as witness.

Says Tuka, while grinding at the mill, the stones rumble and the pebbles are sorted from the grain.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I bow to this one God. My devotion belongs to a single place. Let merit and fault be sorted out: a buffalo is a buffalo, a bull is a bull. Janardana dwells among the people; to Him I make full prostration as my witness. Tuka says: while grinding at the mill, the stones rumble and the pebbles are sorted from the grain.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram fixes his worship on one God and refuses to scatter it. He asks that worth and worthlessness be told apart honestly, the way a beast is named for what it plainly is. Because God, Janardana, lives within all people, his full prostration to that indwelling presence is itself his witness that he serves the one and not the many. The closing image is from daily labor: as grain is ground at the mill, the rumbling stones throw out the stones and grit and keep the grain. So too, he suggests, the work of devotion separates the true from the false within a person.

GATHA 2372

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, God meets each as they hold Him

मराठी मूळ

जीव जीती जीवना संगें । मत्स्या मरण त्या वियोगें॥१॥
जया चितीं जैसा भाव । तयां जविळ तैसा देव ॥२॥
सकळां पाडीये भानु । परि त्या कमळाचें जीवनु ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे माता । वाहे तान्हे याची चिंता ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Fish live by the water; to be parted from it is their death. As the faith in one's chitta, so is God near to each.

The sun shines equally upon all, yet it is the life of the lotus alone. Says Tuka, a mother bears the burden of worry for her nursing child.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Fish live by the water; to be parted from it is their death. As the faith in one's heart, so is God near to that person. The sun shines equally on all, yet it is the life of the lotus alone. Tuka says: a mother carries the worry for her nursing child.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses three plain images to say that God answers each soul in the measure of its longing. The fish lives only in the water and dies when parted from it, so a heart cannot live cut off from God. The sun falls on everything alike, yet it is the lotus, which opens to it, that draws its very life from the sun; God is near to each according to the faith they hold. The last image turns it tender: as a mother bears the constant worry for the child still at her breast, so God carries the helpless devotee. The nearness is real, but it answers the trust we bring.

GATHA 2373

The Nature of God

The Name, God comes running of His own accord

मराठी मूळ

मुंगीचिया घरा कोण जाय मूळ । देखोनियां गूळ धांव घाली ॥1॥
 याचकाविण काय खोळंबला दाता । तोचि धांवे हिता आपुलिया ॥ध्रु॥
 उदक अन्न काये ह्मणे मज खा ये । भुकेला तो जाये चोजवीत ॥2॥
 व्याधी पिडिला धांवे वैद्याचिया घरा । दुःखाच्या परिहारा आपुलिया ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे जया आपुलें स्वहित । करणें तो चि प्रीत धरी कथे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Who goes searching for an ant's home? Seeing jaggery, the ant rushes toward it of its own accord. Does the giver wait for the beggar? He Himself runs toward His own welfare.

Do water and food ever say 'come eat me'? The hungry one goes seeking on his own. One afflicted with disease runs to the doctor's house for the cure of his own suffering.

Says Tuka, whoever cares about his own well-being will naturally be drawn to the sacred story.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Who goes searching for an ant's home? Seeing the jaggery, the ant rushes toward it on its own. Does the giver wait for the beggar? He Himself runs toward His own welfare. Do water and food say 'come, eat me'? The hungry one goes seeking on his own. One sick with disease runs to the doctor's house, for the cure of his own suffering. Tuka says: whoever cares for his own true good will love the sacred story of God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers a quiet objection: why must I seek God, why not wait for Him to find me? With everyday pictures he shows that the one who needs the thing is the one who moves toward it. The ant smells the jaggery and runs; nobody comes hunting the ant's nest to bring it. The hungry man goes to the food, the sick man goes to the doctor, because the gain and the cure are his own. So the listener who truly cares about his own welfare will be drawn, of his own accord, to hearing and dwelling on God. The seeking is not a burden laid on you; it is simply what a person does when he understands where his good lies.

GATHA 2374

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the slanderer's trade

मराठी मूळ

जन्मांतरिंचा परित न्हावी । जात ठेवी त्यानें तें॥१॥
 वाखर जैसा चरचरी । तोंड करी संव दणी ॥धु॥
 पूर्व जन्म शिखासूत्र । मळ मूत्र अंतरीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे करिती निंदा । धुवटधंदा पुढिलांचा ॥३॥
 नाम दुसी त्याचें नको दरषण । विष तें वचन वाटे मज ॥२॥
 अमंगळ वाणी नाइकवे कानीं । निंदेची पोहोणी उठे तेथें॥धु॥
 काय लभ्य त्याचिये वचनीं । कोणत्या पुराणीं दिली ग्वाही ॥२॥
 काय आड लावूं त्याचिया तोंडासी । आतां या जिभेसी काय करूं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे संत न मनिती त्यांस । घेऊं पाहे ग्रास यमदूत ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The washerman and barber from past lives carry their caste through births. The potter's wheel keeps turning and grinding, making the same rasping sound.

Inherited from a former birth are the sacred thread and tuft, yet filth dwells within. Says Tuka, those who engage in slander practice the washerman's trade on others' dirty linen. One whose very name I detest, whose sight I do not wish for, whose words feel like poison to me.

Such impure speech is unbearable to the ears; wherever it arises, a flood of slander follows. What good can come from his words? Which scripture has endorsed them? What barrier can be placed before such a mouth? What shall be done about that tongue? Says Tuka, the saints pay no heed to such people; the messengers of Yama are watching to seize them.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The washerman and barber from past lives carry their caste through births. The potter's wheel keeps turning and grinding, making the same rasping sound. The sacred thread and tuft are inherited from a former birth, yet filth dwells within. Tuka says: those who slander practice the washerman's trade, scrubbing other people's dirty linen. His very name I detest; I do not want the sight of him; his words feel like poison to me. Such foul speech is unbearable to the ears; wherever it rises, a flood of slander follows. What good is there in his words? Which scripture has endorsed them? What barrier can I set before such a mouth? What shall I do about that tongue? Tuka says: the saints pay no heed to such people; the messengers of Yama wait to seize them.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram attacks the habit of slander by exposing what the slanderer is really doing. The man wears the outward marks of caste and piety, the sacred thread and the tuft carried from birth to birth, yet inside he is unclean. His trade, says Tukaram, is the washerman's: he busies himself scrubbing other people's dirty linen, forever handling the faults of others. Such speech is poison to hear, sanctioned by no scripture, and once it starts it floods

everything around it. The closing warning is sharp but aimed at the pattern: the saints simply ignore the slanderer, and death's own messengers are waiting for the tongue that lives this way. The poem invites the listener to ask whether his own mouth has taken up that trade.

GATHA 2375

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the willingly blind

मराठी मूळ

येऊनि नरदेहा झांकितील डोळे । बळें चि अंधळे होती लोक ॥१॥
 उजडासरसी न चलती वाट । पुढील बोभाट जाणोनियां ॥२॥
 बहु फेरे आले सोसोनि वोळसा । पुढें नाहीं ऐसा लाभ मग ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जाऊं सादावीत वाट । भेटे तरी भेटो कोणी तरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Having attained a human birth, they shut their eyes as if by force, willingly making themselves blind. Even in the daylight, they will not walk the path, knowing well what lies ahead.

Many rounds of suffering have already been endured; such a chance will not come again. Says Tuka, let me go forth calling out along the road. Let whoever will meet me, meet me along the way.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Having been given a human birth, they shut their eyes, as if by force making themselves blind. Even in daylight they will not walk the path, though they know well what lies ahead. Many rounds of suffering have already been endured; such a chance will not come again. Tuka says: let me go forth calling out along the road. Whoever will meet me, let him meet me along the way.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram grieves over people who have been given the rare gift of a human birth and then deliberately waste it. They close their eyes against what they could plainly see; even in broad daylight, knowing where the road leads, they refuse to walk it. He reminds them they have already passed through many rounds of birth and suffering, and that this opening will not come again. Then he names his own response: rather than despair, he will go down the road calling out, hoping that whoever is willing will come and join him. The poem is both a lament over willful blindness and a vow to keep summoning anyone who will listen.

GATHA 2376

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the King of Pandhari above all lesser gods

मराठी मूळ

नव्हे जोखाई जोखाई । मायराणी मेसाबाई ॥१॥
 बिळया माझा पंढरिराव । जो या देवांचा ही देव ॥२॥
 रंडी चंडी शक्ति । मद्यमांस भिक्षती ॥३॥
 बहिरव खंडेराव । रोटीसुटीसाठीं देव ॥४॥
 गणोबा विक्राळ । लाडुमोदकांचा काळ ॥५॥
 मुंज्या हौसासुरें । हें तों कोण लेखी पोरें ॥६॥
 वेताळें फेताळें । जळो त्यांचें तोंड काळें ॥७॥
 तुका ह्मणे चितीं । धरा रखुमाईचा पती ॥८॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He is not Jokhai or Jokhai, nor Mayarani, nor Mesabai. My mighty Lord is the King of Pandhari, the God of all gods.

Those fierce goddesses demand offerings of liquor and meat. Bhairav and Khanderav are gods who serve only for bread and butter.

Ganoba is fearsome, a terror who devours only laddoos and modakas. Munja and Mhasasur, who even considers these childish spirits? As for ghosts and ghouls, let their faces burn black.

Says Tuka, hold in your chitta the Husband of Rakhumai alone.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He is not Jokhai, not Jokhai, not Mayarani, not Mesabai. My mighty Lord is the King of Pandhari, the God even of these gods. The fierce goddesses beg for liquor and meat. Bhairav and Khanderav are gods who serve only for bread and a bit of butter. Ganoba is fearsome, a terror only to laddoos and modakas. Munja and Mhasasur, who even counts such childish spirits? As for the ghosts and ghouls, let their black faces burn. Tuka says: hold in your heart the Husband of Rakhumai alone.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram clears the crowded field of local deities to point at the one he worships. He lists the village goddesses and spirits people fear and feed, and he deflates each: the fierce goddesses only want offerings of liquor and meat, Bhairav and Khanderav are bought with bread and butter, the dreaded Ganoba is a terror only to the sweets set before him, and the petty ghosts are not worth counting. Above all of them stands the King of Pandhari, Vitthal, the God even of these gods. The point is not mockery for its own sake but the cutting of dependence on powers that take and give nothing real. His counsel is single: hold in your heart only the Husband of Rakhumai.

GATHA 2377

The Power of the Name

The Name, the discus shields the servant

मराठी मूळ

पडतां जड भारी । दासीं आठवावा हरी ॥१॥
 मग तो होऊं नेदी सीण । आड घाली सुदर्शन ॥२॥
 नामाच्या चिंतनें । बारा वाटा पळती विघ्नें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे प्राण । करा देवासी अर्पण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the burden becomes heavy, servants should remember Hari. Then He will not let weariness prevail; He places the Sudarshana discus as a shield before them.

By the contemplation of the Name, obstacles flee in twelve directions. Says Tuka, offer your very life to God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the burden falls heavy, let the servants remember Hari. Then He will not let weariness win; He sets the Sudarshana discus across the way as a shield. By dwelling on the Name, obstacles flee in twelve directions. Tuka says: offer your very life to God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells the devotee what to do when trouble grows too heavy to bear: simply remember Hari. He promises that God does not leave His servant to be worn down; He places His own weapon, the Sudarshana discus, between the devotee and the danger. Holding the Name in the mind scatters obstacles in every direction. The closing line turns it into a full surrender: offer your life itself to God. The remembering is not a small charm but the giving over of everything to the one who then guards it.

GATHA 2378

Prayers

Prayer, the child sure the Mother will come

मराठी मूळ

माये मोकलिलें कोठें जावें बळें । आपुलिया बळें न वंचे तें ॥१॥
 रुसोनियां पळे सांडुनियां ताट । मागें पाहे वाट यावें ऐसीं ॥२॥
 भांडवल आह्मां आळी करावी हे । आपणें माये धांवसील ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आळी करुनियां निकी । देसील भातुकीं बुझाऊनि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Where can a child go by its own strength when the mother lets it loose? Its own power cannot sustain it. It runs off in a sulk, leaving its plate behind, yet keeps looking back, hoping the mother will come.

Our very capital is this: the right to make demands. O Mother, You Yourself will come running.

Says Tuka, after the petulant plea is done, You will come with a toy to console me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the mother lets it loose, where can the child go by its own strength? Its own power cannot carry it. It runs off in a sulk, leaving its plate behind, yet keeps looking back, hoping she will come. This is all our wealth: the right to make our demands. O Mother, You Yourself will come running. Tuka says: when the petulant pleading is done, You will come and console me with a toy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays in the voice of a small child to God as Mother. He admits he has no strength of his own; if she lets go, he cannot manage. Like a child who sulks and runs off, abandoning his food, he still keeps glancing back, sure the mother will follow. His only capital, he says, is the child's privilege of making demands, of crying and insisting, because the Mother cannot help running to him. The closing line is full of trust: after all the petulant fuss, she will come and quiet him with a small gift. The poem makes helplessness itself the ground of confidence.

GATHA 2379

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the standing form at Pandhari

मराठी मूळ

नागर गोडें बाळरूप । तें स्वरूप काळीचें ॥1॥
 गाईगोपाळांच्या संगें । आलें लागें पुंडलीका ॥ध्रु॥
 तें हें ध्यान दिगांबर । कटीं कर मिरवती ॥2॥
 नेणपणे उगें चि उभें । भक्तिलोभें राहिलें ॥3॥
 नेणे वरदळाचा मान । विटे चरण सम उभें ॥4॥
 सहज कटावरी हात । दहींभात शिदोरी ॥5॥
 मोहरी पांवा गांजिवा पाठीं । धरिली काठी ज्या काळें ॥6॥
 रम्य स्थळ चंद्रभागा । पांडुरंगा क्रीडेसी ॥7॥
 भीमा दक्षणमुख वाहे । दृष्टी पाहे समोर ॥8॥
 तारावेसे मूढ लोक । दिली भाक पुंडलिका ॥9॥
 तुका ह्याने वैकुंठवासी । भक्तांपासीं राहिला ॥10॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

That gracious, sweet, childlike form is the very form of the Dark One. In the company of cowherds and cows, He came, drawn by Pundalik.

That is the very object of meditation: standing unclothed, hands resting on the waist. In His innocence, He stands quietly still, held there by His love for devotees.

He pays no attention to outward pomp; He stands with feet even upon the brick. His hands rest naturally at His hips; His provision is curds and rice.

A flute, a horn, a quiver on His back, and a staff He once held. The beautiful place of the Chandrabhaga river is His playground, O Panduranga.

The Bhima flows southward, and His gaze falls straight ahead. He made a promise to Pundalik to save the ignorant.

Says Tuka, the Dweller of Vaikuntha has remained here, close to His devotees.

IN PLAIN WORDS

That gracious, sweet, childlike form is the very form of the Dark One. In the company of cows and cowherds He came, drawn by Pundalik. This is the form to meditate on: standing bare, hands resting on the waist. In His innocence He stands quietly still, held there by love for His devotees. He pays no heed to outward pomp; He stands with feet even upon the brick. His hands rest easily at His hips; His provision is curds and rice. A flute, a horn, a quiver on His back, and a staff He once held. The lovely bank of the Chandrabhaga is His playground, O Panduranga. The Bhima flows southward, and His gaze falls straight ahead. He gave His word to Pundalik to save the ignorant. Tuka says: the Dweller of Vaikuntha has stayed here, close to His devotees.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram contemplates Vitthal as He stands on the brick at Pandhاري and traces the whole image with love. The sweet child-form is none other than Krishna, the Dark One, who came among cows and cowherds and was drawn here by His devotee Pundalik. He describes the well-known posture: standing bare and still, hands on the hips, feet even on the brick, fed simply on curds and rice, the flute and herdsman's gear about Him. The setting is named too, the Chandrabhaga and the Bhima flowing south by the shrine. Tukaram dwells on why He stays: not for any pomp, but held by love and by the promise He made Pundalik to rescue the ignorant. The Lord of Vaikuntha has chosen to remain here, within reach of those who love Him.

GATHA 2380

The Power of the Name

The Name, no faith in Vitthal is hell

मराठी मूळ

विठ्ठलनामाचा नाहीं ज्या विश्वास । तो वसे उदास नरकामध्ये ॥१॥
 त्यासी बोलतां होईल विटाळ । नेव जाये तो जळस्नान करितां ॥२॥
 विठ्ठलनामाची नाहीं ज्या आवडी । त्याची काळ घडी लेखिताहे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज विठोबाची आण । जरी प्रतिवचन करिन त्यासी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who has no faith in Vitthal's Name dwells in a desolate hell. Even speaking to such a person brings contamination that does not wash away with bathing.

One who has no love for Vitthal's Name is being counted moment by moment by Death. Says Tuka, I swear by Vitthal: I shall not even answer such a one.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One who has no faith in Vitthal's Name dwells in a desolate hell. Even speaking to such a person brings a defilement that no bathing washes away. One who has no love for Vitthal's Name has his every moment counted off by Death. Tuka says: I swear by Vithoba, I will not even answer such a one.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram states bluntly how much the Name matters to him. The person who has no faith in Vitthal's Name is already living in a barren hell, and merely talking with him leaves a stain that ritual bathing cannot rinse off. For the one who has no love for the Name, time itself is only Death counting down his moments. The harshness is aimed at the condition, faithlessness, not at the man's worth; it measures the gulf the Name opens. Tukaram seals it with an oath in Vithoba's own name: he will not so much as answer such a person, so completely does he stake his life on devotion.

GATHA 2381

The Power of the Name

The Name, every discipline fulfilled

मराठी मूळ

तया घडले सकळ नेम । मुखीं विठोबाचें नाम॥१॥
 कांहीं न लगे सिणावें । आणिक वेगळाल्या भावें । वाचे उच्चारवें । रामकृष्णगोविंदा ॥२॥
 फळ पावाल अवलिळा । भोग वैकुंठ सोहळा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने त्याच्या नांवें । तो चि होइजेल स्वभावें॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

All disciplines are fulfilled for the one who has Vitthal's Name on his lips. There is no need to toil at anything else or adopt any separate practice.

Simply utter with your voice: Rama, Krishna, Govinda. You shall effortlessly attain the fruit, the enjoyment and celebration of Vaikuntha.

Says Tuka, by His Name, one naturally becomes like Him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

For the one who keeps Vithoba's name on his lips, every discipline is already done. You need not toil at anything else. You need not take up any other practice. Just say it with your voice: Rama, Krishna, Govinda. You will gain the fruit with no effort, the joy and the festival of Vaikuntha. Tuka says: by His name, you naturally become like Him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram collapses the whole ladder of religious effort into one act: the name on the lips. He is not saying the disciplines are good and the name is a shortcut; he is saying the name fulfills them all, so the separate striving becomes needless toil. The two syllables, said with the voice, carry the speaker into Vaikuntha without labor. And the closing claim is the sharpest: you do not just reach God by His name, you take on His nature. Repeating what He is, you become like Him.

GATHA 2382

*The Power of the Name**The Name, what scripture condemned now honored*

मराठी मूळ

पुराणप्रसिद्ध सीमा । नामतारकमहिमा ॥१॥
 मार्गे जाळी महा दोष । पुढें नाही गर्भवास ॥२॥
 जें निंदिलें शास्त्रें । वंद्य जालें नाममात्रें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने ऐसा । त्रिभुवनीं नामठसा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The saving power of the Name is well-established in the Puranas. It burns away great sins from the past and ensures there is no future birth in the womb.

What was condemned by the scriptures has become venerable by the Name alone. Says Tuka, such is the seal of the Name upon all three worlds.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The saving power of the name is set down in the Puranas. It burns away great sins behind you. It leaves no birth in the womb ahead of you. What the scriptures condemned has become worthy of worship by the name alone. Tuka says: such is the seal of the name upon all three worlds.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram puts the name above the very texts that rank and condemn. The Puranas attest its saving power, yet the name does something the law could not: it lifts a person the scriptures had cast down and makes that person venerable. So the name overturns the verdict of caste and code, not by argument but by its own force. Past sin is burned, future rebirth cut off. He calls it a seal stamped across all three worlds, an authority nothing can revoke.

GATHA 2383

*The Power of the Name**The Name, free and open to all*

मराठी मूळ

नाम घेतां न लगे मोल । नाममंत्र नाही खोल ॥१॥
 दो अक्षरांचें काम । उच्चारारवें राम राम ॥२॥
 नाही वर्णाधमयाती । नामीं अवघीं चि सरतीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने नाम । चैतन्य निजधाम ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Taking the Name costs nothing; the Name-mantra is not obscure. It is the work of just two syllables: say Rama, Rama.

There is no high or low station before the Name; all are equal in it. Says Tuka, the Name is pure consciousness, the true abode.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Taking the name costs nothing. The name-mantra is not hidden or hard. It is the work of just two syllables: say Rama, Rama. Before the name there is no high birth and no low one; in it, all are equal, all pass through. Tuka says: the name is pure consciousness, the true home.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers the world's gatekeeping with the cheapness of the name. It asks no fee, no secret initiation, no scholarship; two syllables are the whole practice. Then he names the stake plainly: before the name, the ranks of birth, high and low, simply do not hold. Everyone enters equally. And the name is not a mere sound pointing elsewhere; he calls it pure consciousness itself, the true abode, so that to take the name is already to stand where God lives.

GATHA 2384

The Power of the Name

The Name, challenge to the saints

मराठी मूळ

नाम घेतां वांयां गेलां । ऐसा कोणें आर्दिकला ॥१॥
 सांगा विनवितों तुझांसी । संत महंत सिद्ध ऋषी ॥२॥
 नामें तरला नाही कोण । ऐसा द्यावा निवडून ॥३॥
 सलगीच्या उत्तरा । तुका ह्मणे क्षमा करा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Has anyone ever heard of the Name being taken in vain? I ask you humbly, O saints, sages, and perfected ones. Show me a single person who was not saved by the Name.

Says Tuka, forgive these frank words spoken out of familiarity.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Has anyone ever heard of the name being taken in vain? I ask you humbly: O saints, O great ones, O perfected souls, O sages, tell me. Show me one single person whom the name did not save. Tuka says: forgive these frank words; I speak them out of nearness to you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns his certainty into a challenge and lays it before the whole company of the holy. He is not asking whether the name works; he is daring anyone, even the greatest, to produce a single soul it ever failed. The silence is the proof. The closing line softens the boldness without taking it back: he asks pardon for speaking so plainly, calling it the frankness of one who feels close enough to press the question. The familiarity is real; so is the claim.

GATHA 2385

The Power of the Name

The Name, the free treasure

मराठी मूळ

फुकाचें तें लुटा सार । व्हा रे अमर सदैव ॥१॥
 नाहीं गर्भवास पुढती । डोंगर जळती दोषांचे ॥२॥
 उदंड भावें उदंड घ्यावें । नाम गावें आवडी ॥३॥ ॥१५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Loot this free treasure, the essence of all. Become immortal forever.

There will be no more birth in the womb; mountains of sin will burn to ash. Take abundantly, with abundant devotion; sing the Name with love.

Says Tuka, right here in your own home, without tiring yourself wandering to distant lands.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Loot this free treasure, the heart of everything. Become deathless, for all time. There is no more birth in the womb ahead of you; the mountains of your sins burn to ash. Take of it abundantly, with abundant love; sing the name with longing. Tuka says: right here, at home in your own house, with no wearing yourself out wandering to far countries.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram throws open a treasury and tells the listener to plunder it, because it costs nothing and is the essence of all. He names what is gained: deathlessness, the end of rebirth, sins burned away like mountains turned to ash. The instruction is simple and large at once: take much, love much, sing with longing. And the last line removes the final excuse: no pilgrimage to distant lands is required. The whole treasure is reachable at home, on your own lips.

GATHA 2386

The Power of the Name

Grace, the Name covers the flawed devotee

मराठी मूळ

प्रीति नाही राया वजिनली ते कांता । परी तिची सत्ता जगावरी ॥१॥
 तैसे दंभी जालों तरी तुझे भक्त । वास यमदूत न पाहाती ॥२॥
 राजयाचा पुत्र अपराधी देखा । तो काय आणिकां दंडवेल ॥३॥
 बाहातरी खोडी परी देवमण कंठीं । तैसो जगजेठी ह्मणे तुका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A queen who has fallen out of the king's favor is still his wife, and her authority over the realm remains. Similarly, even if we have become devotees merely in outward appearance, the messengers of Yama will not look our way.

Even a prince who commits offense cannot be punished by outsiders. Says Tuka, there may be seventy-two faults in him, yet the gem of God's Name hangs at his throat.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A queen who has lost the king's love is still his wife, and her power over the realm still holds. So even if I have become a devotee only in show, the messengers of Yama do not look my way. A king's son who does wrong cannot be punished by outsiders. Tuka says: there may be seventy-two faults in him, yet the jewel of God's name hangs at his throat; so he belongs to the Lord of the worlds.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses an uncomfortable comfort: belonging counts even when the love has gone cold and the conduct is poor. The fallen queen keeps her standing because she is the king's; the wayward prince is beyond outsiders' punishment because he is the king's son. By the same logic, one who wears God's name, even a hypocrite full of faults, is shielded from Yama's agents, because the name marks him as God's own. He is not excusing the seventy-two faults; he is saying that the claim of belonging, the jewel at the throat, is stronger than the flaws, and the one who wears it is the Lord's to deal with, no one else's.

GATHA 2387

Prayers

Prayer, demanding a single answer

मराठी मूळ

करावा उद्धार किंवा घ्यावी हारी । एका बोला िस्थरी राहें देवा ॥१॥
 निरसनं माझा होईल संदेह । अवघें चि आहे मूळ पायीं ॥२॥
 राहिलों चिकटूण कांहीं चि न कळे । कोणा नेणों काळे उदय भाग्य ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Either grant deliverance or let me accept defeat; just be firm in one word, O God. By Your decisive answer, my doubt will be resolved; everything rests at the root of Your feet.

I remain stuck, unable to understand anything. I do not know whose fortune is dark and whose rises.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Either lift me up or let me lose; just be firm in one word, O God. When You decide, my doubt will be gone; everything rests at the root of Your feet. I stay stuck, and I cannot understand anything. I do not know whose time is dark and whose fortune is rising.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is done with suspense and asks God simply to settle it. Save him or let him be defeated, he says, but speak one firm word, because the not-knowing is worse than either outcome. He admits the whole matter lies at God's feet, not in his own hands. Then he names his real condition: stuck, baffled, unable to read his own

situation, unsure whether this is his dark hour or the turn toward fortune. The prayer is for a verdict, any verdict, to end the limbo.

GATHA 2388

Prayers

Prayer, the distressed soul pleads

मराठी मूळ

तुका ह्याणे बहु उद्वेगला जीव । भाकीतसें कीव देवराया ॥३॥ ॥१॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Says Tuka, my jiva is greatly distressed. I plead for mercy, O God-King.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka says: my soul is greatly troubled. I plead for mercy, O God-King.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the bare cry that closes a prayer. Tukaram drops all argument and reports his state: the jiva is deeply distressed. He asks for one thing, mercy, and addresses God as King, the one with the power to grant it. Short as it is, it holds the whole posture of surrender, a soul at the end of its own resources turning the matter over to God.

GATHA 2389

Faith and Trust

Faith, lay the burden on God

मराठी मूळ

आलिया भोगासी असावें सादर । देवावरी भार घालूनियां ॥१॥
मग तो कृपासिंधु निवारी सांकडें । येर तें बापुडें काय रंके ॥२॥
भयाचिये पोटीं दुःखाचिया रासी । शरण देवासी जातां भले ॥३॥
तुका ह्याणे नव्हे काय त्या करितां । चिंतावा तो आतां विश्वंभर ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Face whatever comes with equanimity, placing the burden upon God. Then that Ocean of Mercy will remove all difficulties.

What can a poor wretch do otherwise? When fear fills the chitta and mountains of sorrow surround you, it is good to take refuge in God. Says Tuka, is there anything He cannot do? Now think upon the Sustainer of all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever comes to be borne, meet it ready, and lay the weight on God. Then that Ocean of Mercy will clear the trouble away. What can a poor helpless soul do otherwise? When fear fills you and heaps of sorrow close in, it is good to go for refuge to God. Tuka says: is there anything He cannot do? Now think on Him, the Sustainer of all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram offers a practice for hard times: accept what comes and hand its weight to God, who, being an ocean of mercy, will remove the difficulty. He is honest about why, because on your own you are a helpless wretch who can do nothing. When fear and piled-up sorrow surround you, refuge is the wise move, not the weak one. The closing question is the ground of the whole counsel: there is nothing the Sustainer of all cannot do, so turn your thought to Him now.

GATHA 2390

Worldly Life

Worldly life, peace through past karma

मराठी मूळ

भोग तो न घडे संचितावांचूनि । करावें तें मनीं समाधान ॥१॥
 ह्मणऊनी मनीं मानूं नये खेदु । ह्मणावा गोविंद वेळोवेळां ॥२॥
 आणिकां रुसावें न लगे बहुतां । आपुल्या संचितावांचूनियां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे भार घातलिया वरी । होईल कैवारी नारायण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Nothing happens without the fruition of past karma. Therefore, keep the mind at peace.

For this reason, do not harbor grief. Repeat the name of Govinda at every moment.

There is no need to be angry with many others; nothing comes apart from one's own accumulated deeds. Says Tuka, once the burden is placed upon Him, Narayana becomes your champion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

No experience comes to you except by your past deeds; so keep the mind at peace. For this reason, do not hold grief in the heart. Say Govinda's name again and again. There is no need to be angry at so many others; nothing reaches you apart from what you yourself have stored up. Tuka says: once the weight is laid upon Him, Narayana becomes your defender.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram gives a settled way to carry the world. Whatever befalls you is the ripening of your own past karma, so let the mind rest rather than rage. From this he draws two practical moves: refuse grief, and keep Govinda's name on the tongue. He also cuts off blame; since nothing comes except from your own store of deeds, anger at others is misplaced. And he adds the turn that makes acceptance more than fatalism: hand the burden to Narayana, and God himself takes up your side as champion.

GATHA 2391

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, enmity-free toward all

मराठी मूळ

निर्वैर द्वावें सर्वभूतांसवें । साधन बरवें हें चि एक॥१॥
 तरी च अंगीकार करिल नारायण । बडबड तो सीण येणेंविण ॥२॥
 सोडरें पिशुन समान चि घटे । चित्त पर ओढे उपकारी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे चित्त जालिया निर्मळ । तरि च सकळ केलें होय ॥३॥
 रिद्धि सिद्ध येती घरा । त्याचा करिती पसारा ॥४॥
 मानदंभांसाठीं । पडे देवासवें तुटी ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे मेवा । कैचा वेठीच्या नदवां॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Be free of enmity toward all beings. This alone is the best of spiritual practices.

Only then will Narayana accept you. Without this, all talk is mere weariness.

Let friends and foes be treated equally. Let the mind be drawn only to that which benefits others.

Says Tuka, only when the mind is truly purified does everything one has done bear fruit.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Be without enmity toward every living being. This alone is the good practice, the one that matters. Only then will Narayana take you as His own; without it, all the chatter is just weariness. Let friend and slanderer count the same to you; let the mind lean only toward helping others. Tuka says: only when the mind has become clean does everything you have done bear fruit. Then powers and attainments come to your door and make their show. But for the sake of honor and display, the bond with God is broken. Tuka says: how can there be any sweetness in fruit picked by force.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names the one practice he will rank above all others: freedom from enmity toward every being. Without it, he says, the rest is noise that only tires you, and God will not own you; with it, Narayana accepts you. The test is concrete, treat the one who praises you and the one who slanders you alike, and bend the mind toward others' good. Only such a cleaned mind makes all your past effort finally fruitful. He then warns of the trap that follows success: when powers and attainments arrive, using them for honor and display snaps the bond with God. The closing image lands it, fruit seized by force has no sweetness; what is taken for show is no longer a gift from God.

GATHA 2392

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the mind tempered in fire

मराठी मूळ

तापल्यावांचून नव्हे अळंकार । पिटूनियां सार उरलें तें ॥१॥
मग कदाकाळीं नव्हे शुद्ध जाति । नासें शत्रु होती मित्र ते चि ॥२॥
किळवर बरें भोगूं द्यावें भोगा । फांसिलें तें रोगा हातीं सुटे ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे मन करावें पाठेळ । साहावे चि जाळ सिजेवरि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Without heating in the fire, no ornament can be fashioned. Only what survives the hammering endures.

Once tested, the pure essence never degrades; enemies are turned into friends. One should allow the gross to be consumed by experience.

That which is refined endures and is freed from disease. Says Tuka, make the mind as tough as leather. Endure the burning until it is fully cooked.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Without being heated, gold becomes no ornament; only what survives the hammering is left. Once tested, the pure kind never spoils; what was an enemy turns into a friend. Let the body spend its given experience to the full; what is so consumed slips free of disease. Tuka says: make the mind tough as leather. Bear the burning until you are fully cooked.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses the goldsmith's fire to explain why suffering is not punishment but making. Gold cannot become an ornament without being heated and hammered; only the part that endures the blows remains and becomes the true shape. Once it has passed through the fire, the pure metal no longer degrades, and what attacked it now serves it. So with a life: let experience burn through you completely, and what is consumed lets you go free. The closing instruction is stark, make the mind as tough as leather and endure the burning to the end, because only the fully cooked is finished.

GATHA 2393

Worldly Metaphors

The seasoning of the self, blows that ripen

मराठी मूळ

पाठेळ करितां न साहावे वारा । साहेलिया डोरा गोणी चाले ॥१॥
आपणां आपण हे चि कसवटी । हर्षामर्ष पोटीं विरों द्यावें ॥२॥
नवनीत तोंवरी कडकडी लोणी । निश्चळ होऊनी राहे मग ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे जरी जग टाकी घाया । त्याच्या पडे पायां जन मग ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

While the hide is being cured, it cannot withstand the wind. But once toughened, the ox bears the sack without complaint.

Test yourself against yourself. Let joy and sorrow dissolve within.

Butter churns and hardens from the curd. Once it becomes still, it stays firm.

Says Tuka, if the world beats you with blows, the world will fall at your feet in the end.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the hide is still being cured, it cannot bear even the wind. Once it has toughened, the ox carries the loaded sack and does not complain. You are your own touchstone. Let joy and resentment dissolve inside you. Butter sputters and crackles out of the curd; once it grows still, it stays firm. Tuka says: if the world beats you with blows, then in the end the world falls at your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers the soul that flinches at every hardship by pointing to how things are made strong. Raw hide tears in the wind, but once cured it carries the heavy sack; butter forms only after the curd is churned and then settles into something firm. So the self is tested against itself, and the test is whether joy and resentment can be let go rather than clung to. The blows of the world are not the enemy here; they are the curing and the churning. The one who lets them dissolve pride and irritation is the one the world will finally honor.

GATHA 2394

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the incurable nature

मराठी मूळ

काविळ्यासी नाही दया उपकार । काळमा अंतर विटाळसें ॥१॥
 तैसें कुधनाचें जिणें अमंगळ । घाणेरी वोंगळ वदे वाणी ॥२॥
 कडु भोंपळ्याचा उपचारें पाक । सेविल्या तिडीक कपाळासी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे विष सांडूं नेणे साप । आदरें तें पाप त्याचे ठायीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Jaundice knows no gratitude or kindness; its inner darkness remains a defilement. Similarly, the life of wicked wealth is impure.

Its speech is foul and filthy. No amount of preparation can make a bitter gourd palatable; one who consumes it gets only a headache.

Says Tuka, a snake cannot abandon its venom; sin is inherent in its very nature.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Jaundice has no gratitude and gives no kindness; its darkness stays inside as a stain. So too the life lived on wicked wealth is foul. Its speech is filthy and unclean. No amount of cooking makes a bitter gourd sweet; eat it and you get only a splitting head. Tuka says: a snake does not know how to give up its venom. Sin sits at home in such a one, honored there.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing a pattern that does not change from the outside, not condemning a person beyond hope. Jaundice tints everything it touches; a bitter gourd stays bitter however carefully you prepare it; a snake carries its venom by its very nature. He uses these to name a way of living that is rooted in ill-gotten gain and foul speech: dress it up however you like, the inner stain remains. The warning is meant to be turned inward, so a listener checks whether the rot is being carried within rather than merely cooked over. Where harm is held as a guest and made welcome, no surface remedy reaches it.

GATHA 2395

*The Necessity of Experience**Experience, the profit that cannot be lost*

मराठी मूळ

लाभ खरा नये तुटी । नाहीं आडखळा भेटी ॥१॥
जाय अवघिया देशा । येथें संचलाची तैसा ॥२॥
मग न लगे पारखी। अवघीं सकट सारखीं । तुका ह्याणे वोळे । रुपें भुलविले डोळे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*True profit cannot be lost. There is no obstacle to this meeting.**It travels to every land, yet remains exactly as it is. Then no appraiser is needed; all vessels measure the same.**Says Tuka, His forms enchant the eyes.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

The true profit cannot be lost. There is no obstacle to this meeting. It goes to every land, and here it stays just as it is. Then no appraiser is needed; every vessel measures the same. Tuka says: it overflows. His forms have charmed my eyes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is speaking from experience about a gain unlike any worldly one. Ordinary profit can be lost, blocked, or weighed differently by each appraiser; this profit cannot be lost, faces no obstacle to the meeting, and remains the same wherever it goes. Because it is one and full everywhere, no expert is needed to assay it and every measure comes out equal. The poem ends in wonder rather than argument: it overflows, and God's forms have so charmed the eyes that the seeker no longer counts the gain at all.

GATHA 2396

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, go to Pandharpur

मराठी मूळ

2394. नको आतां पुसों कांहीं । लवलाहीं उसंती ॥१॥
जाय वेगीं पंढरपुरा । तो सोयरा दीनांचा ॥२॥
वचनाचा न करीं गोवा । रिघें देवासीं शरण ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे कृपावंता । बहु चिंता दीनाची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Ask no more questions now; seek rest without delay. Go quickly to Pandharpur.

He is the true kinsman of the wretched. Do not get entangled in the snare of words; take refuge in God directly.

Says Tuka, the Compassionate One has great care for the lowly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Ask no more questions now; rest quickly. Go at once to Pandharpur. He is the kinsman of the helpless. Do not get tangled in words; go straight and take refuge in God. Tuka says: the Compassionate One cares greatly for the lowly.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram urges someone to stop deliberating and act. The endless questions and clever talk are themselves the snare; what is needed is to set them down and go directly to Pandharpur, to Vitthal. The reason given is the only one that matters: God is the kinsman of the wretched and carries great care for the lowly. Refuge, not reasoning, is the path he points to, and he tells the listener to take it without delay.

GATHA 2397

Prayers

Prayer, do not pass us over

मराठी मूळ

बुद्धिहीनां जडजीवां । नको देवा उपेक्षूं ॥१॥
परिसावी हे विज्ञापना । आह्मां दीनां दासांची ॥२॥
चिंतूनियां आले पाय । त्यांसी काय वंचन ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे पुरुषोत्तमा । करीं क्षमा अपराध ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O God, do not disregard the dull-witted and the inert jivas. Hear this petition from us, Your lowly servants.

Those who have come contemplating Your feet, will You deceive them? Says Tuka, O Supreme Being, forgive our transgressions.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O God, do not pass over the dull-witted and the inert souls. Hear this petition of ours, Your lowly servants. Those who have come thinking of Your feet, will You cheat them? Tuka says: O Supreme Being, forgive our wrongs.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays on behalf of the slow and the spiritually inert, the ones least able to plead for themselves. He asks God not to overlook them and to hear the petition of His lowly servants. His leverage is God's own character: those who have come holding His feet in mind cannot be deceived by Him. So the prayer ends by simply asking the Supreme to forgive the transgressions, trusting that mercy, not merit, is what answers.

GATHA 2398

Prayers

Prayer, the treasury is in Your hands

मराठी मूळ

ह्मणऊनि काकुळती । येतों पुढतों पुढती । तुह्मां असे हातीं । कमळापती भांडार ॥१॥
 फेडूं आलेती दरिद्र । तरी न लगे उशीर । पुरे अभयंकर । ठाया ठाव रंकाशी ॥२॥
 कोठें न घली धांव । याजसाठीं तजिली हांव । घेऊं नेदी वाव । मना केला विरोध ॥३॥
 कारणांच्या गुणें । वेळ काळ तोही नेणें । तुमच्या कीर्तनें । तुका तुह्मां जागवी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Therefore I come again and again with folded hands. The treasury is in Your keeping, O Lord of Lakshmi.

We have come to end our poverty; then let there be no delay. Grant us a place of fearlessness.

We run nowhere else; for this reason, we have abandoned all craving. We do not allow the mind any room for resistance.

Says Tuka, by Your own kirtan, I keep calling You awake at every hour and season.

IN PLAIN WORDS

So I come pleading again and again. The treasury is in Your hands, O Lord of Lakshmi. We have come to end our poverty; then do not delay. It is enough, Giver of fearlessness, to grant the destitute a place to stand. We run nowhere else; for this I have given up all craving. I let the mind take no room to resist. By the power of the need, He forgets even time and season. Tuka says: with Your own kirtan, Tuka keeps You awake.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram comes back to God again and again because the whole treasury is in God's keeping; the poverty he wants ended is spiritual, and the gift he asks for the destitute is a place to stand and freedom from fear. He has cut off every other refuge and craving, and he refuses to let his own mind argue him out of this dependence. The closing image is bold and tender: the urgency of the need pulls God past all sense of the right time, and Tuka, through ceaseless kirtan, keeps singing until he rouses the Lord himself. It is prayer as loving insistence, not polite request.

GATHA 2399

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the many names and the one sweetness

मराठी मूळ

बहु नांवें ठेविलीं स्तुतीचे आवडी । बहुत या गोडी आली रसा ॥१॥
 बहु सोसें सेवन केलें बहुवस । बहु आला दिस गोमटणाचा ॥ध्रु॥
 बहुतां पुरला बहुतां उरला । बहुतांचा केला बहु नट ॥२॥
 बहु तुका जाला निकट वृत्ती । बहु काकुलती येऊनियां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Many names have been given to You out of the pleasure of praise. Such sweetness has come into this nectar.

Many have served You abundantly and with great devotion. A beautiful day has dawned.

You have sufficed for many, outlasted many, and entertained many as a great actor. Says Tuka, I have drawn very near, coming with earnest supplication.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Many names have been given to You out of the love of praise; great sweetness has come into this nectar. With much longing and in many ways You have been served; a beautiful day has dawned. You have been enough for many, have outlasted many, and have played the great actor for many. Tuka says: Tuka has drawn very near to You, coming with much pleading.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is delighting in how the one God answers to countless names, each given out of the sheer pleasure of praising Him, and how all that praise has turned into a single sweetness, a nectar. He sees that God has been served by many in many ways, and that this devotion has ripened into a good day. The one God is enough for all, outlasts all, and plays His many roles like a great actor on the stage of the world. For himself, Tuka claims only that through earnest pleading he has at last come close.

GATHA 2400

Renunciation

Renunciation, a guest in this world

मराठी मूळ

येहलोकीं आह्मां वस्तीचें पेणें । उदासीन तेणें देहभावीं ॥१॥
 कार्यापुरतें कारण मारगीं । उलंघूनि वेगीं जावें स्थळा ॥ध्रु॥
 सोंगसंपादणी चालवितों वेव्हार । अत्यंतिक आदर नाही गोवा ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे वेंच लाविला संचिता । होइल घेतां लोभ कोणां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In this world, our stay is but a temporary shelter. We are therefore detached from bodily existence.

For the journey, only what is needed; one must cross over quickly to the true destination. We carry on worldly transactions as a formality, a performance; there is no deep attachment to it all.

Says Tuka, we have set our accumulated karma to spend itself. Let anyone take it who wishes; what should we covet?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In this world our stay is only a night's lodging. So we are detached from the sense of being the body. On the road we take only what the journey needs, and cross over quickly to our true place. We carry on our affairs as a performance, a costume kept up; there is no deep attachment in it. Tuka says: I have set my stored-up karma to spend itself. Let anyone take it who wishes; what is there to covet?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram treats this life as an overnight stop, not a home, and so loosens his grip on the body and its claims. A traveler carries only what the road requires and hurries on to the real destination; in the same way he keeps up his worldly dealings as a kind of costume, going through the motions without clinging to them. He has decided to let his accumulated karma simply burn off rather than hoard or guard it. The closing question, what is there to covet, is the whole stance: when the stay is brief and the self is not the body, there is nothing here worth grasping.

GATHA 2401

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, liberation tied in the bundle

मराठी मूळ

साकरेचें नाम घेतां कळे गोडी । तैसी आह्मां जोडी वैष्णवांची ॥१॥
मोक्ष गांठी असे ठेविला बांधोनी । सोस तो भजनीं आवडीचा ॥२॥
भोजनाची चिंता माय वाहे बाळा । आह्मांसि तरी खेळावरि चित्त ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे आह्मी देहउपकारें । गाऊं निरंतर नाचों लागों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even by just saying the name 'sugar,' one can recall its sweetness. Such is the gain we find in the company of Vaishnavas.

Liberation lies tied up and ready in our bundle, yet our real longing is for the delight of devotion itself. A mother worries about feeding her child, but we children care only for play.

Says Tuka, as a service to this body, we sing, dance, and devote ourselves ceaselessly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Just saying the word 'sugar' lets you taste its sweetness; such is the gain we have in the company of Vaishnavas. Liberation lies tied and ready in our bundle, but our real longing is for the joy of devotion. A mother frets over feeding her child, but our minds are set only on play. Tuka says: as a use for this body, we sing without stopping and we fall to dancing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says the company of the devotees is so full that even speaking of it carries its sweetness, the way the word sugar already brings the taste to mind. Liberation, the thing others strive for, is already tied up and waiting in his bundle, so he no longer hungers for it; his whole longing is for the delight of devotion itself. Like children absorbed in play while the mother worries about their meals, the devotees leave the matter of release to God and care only for the singing and dancing. He ends by naming the body's true purpose: to sing the Name ceaselessly and to dance.

GATHA 2402

The Saints

The saints, the final audit

मराठी मूळ

त्रिविधकर्माचे वेगळाले भाव । निवडूनि ठाव दाखविला ॥१॥
 आलियाचा झाडा राहिल्याचा ठाव । सुख गौरव संतां अंगीं ॥२॥
 हिशेबें आलें तें सकळांसी प्रमाण । तेथें नाही आन चालों येत ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाही पापपुण्य खतीं । झाडणाची हुजती हातां आली ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The distinct paths of the three kinds of action have been sorted and their places shown. What has come and what has settled is evident.

The saints carry within them grace and honor. What is established by honest reckoning is the authority for all; no alternative can prevail against it.

Says Tuka, there is no sin or merit on the ledger; the final audit has come into our hands.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The different fruits of the three kinds of action have been sorted out and each one's place has been shown. What has come due and what still stands is made clear. The joy and the honor rest in the bodies of the saints. What the honest reckoning brings is the measure for all; nothing else can pass there. Tuka says: there is no sin or merit left on the ledger; the closing of the account has come into our hands.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks of a settling of spiritual accounts. The fruits of the three kinds of action have been separated and assigned, what is owed and what remains made plain, and the whole reckoning is honest, so no false claim can stand against it. The grace and honor of this settlement live in the bodies of the saints, who embody its truth. The freeing conclusion is that for the devotee the books are now clear of sin and merit alike: the final audit has been handed over and closed, and one is no longer bound by the old ledger of deeds.

GATHA 2403

Renunciation

Renunciation, only Your feet hold still

मराठी मूळ

करुं जातां सन्निधान । क्षणि जन पालटे ॥१॥
 आतां गोमटे ते पाय । तुझे माय विठ्ठले ॥२॥
 हें तों आलें अनुभवा । पाहावें जीवावरुनि ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे केला त्याग । सर्वसंग ह्मणऊनि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When you try to get close to people, they change in an instant. Therefore, O Mother Vitthal, Your feet alone are beautiful.

This truth has come through experience; one must test it at the cost of one's life. Says Tuka, that is why I have renounced all worldly attachments.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When you try to draw close to people, they change in an instant. Now Your feet alone are beautiful, O Mother Vitthal. This has come to me through experience; it must be tested at the cost of one's life. Tuka says: that is why I have renounced every attachment.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram has learned the unreliability of people the hard way: get close and they turn on you in a moment. Against that shifting ground he sets the one thing that does not change, the feet of Vitthal, whom he addresses tenderly as Mother. He insists this is not a borrowed idea but a truth proven through lived experience, the kind one tests with one's whole life. That proof is the reason he gives for letting go of every worldly attachment and resting only there.

GATHA 2404

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the wrong thing in the wrong place

मराठी मूळ

क्षीर मागे तया रायतें वाढी । पाधानी गधडी ऐशा नांवें ॥१॥
 समयो जाणां समयो जाणां । भलतें नाणां भलतेथें ॥२॥
 अमंगळ वाणी वदवी मंगळी । अशुभ वोंगळी शोभन तें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे नेणें समयो ठाया ठाव । राहाडी ते वाव नरकाडी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When milk is requested, he serves buttermilk instead; such is the conduct of a fool. Know the right occasion; do not put the wrong thing in the wrong place.

An impure tongue speaks auspicious words; what is unclean and inauspicious parades as sacred. Says Tuka, the one who does not know the proper time and place turns a shrine into a cesspool.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Ask him for milk and he serves you buttermilk; a fool earns such a name. Know the occasion, know the occasion; do not put the wrong thing in the wrong place. He makes an impure tongue speak the auspicious words; the foul and unclean is paraded as fine. Tuka says: the one who does not know the right time and place turns a holy shrine into a cesspool.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is warning against the failure to fit the act to the moment. Serving buttermilk when milk was asked, speaking sacred words with an unclean tongue, dressing up the foul as fine: each is the right thing put in the wrong place, or the wrong thing where the right belonged. The repeated call to know the occasion is the heart of it. He drives the point home with a sharp image: without that sense of time and place, even what should be a shrine is turned into filth, and the failing is meant to make the listener examine his own sense of what fits where.

GATHA 2405

Worldly Metaphors

Self-examination, the fault is your own

मराठी मूळ

विंचा पीडी नांगी । ज्याचा दोष त्याचे अंगी ॥१॥
केला पाहिजे विचार । मन मित्र दावेदार ॥२॥
मधुरा उत्तरी । रांवा खेळे उरावरी ॥३॥
तुका ह्याने रेडा । सुखें जाती ऐशा पीडा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A scorpion stings with its own tail; its fault resides in its own body. One must reflect carefully; the mind can be both friend and accuser.

With sweet words, a cobra plays upon your chest. Says Tuka, a bull endures all such torments without complaint.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A scorpion stings with its own tail. Its poison is in its own body; the fault is its own. So you must reflect. The mind can be your friend, and the mind can be the one who accuses you. With sweet words a snake will play upon your chest. Tuka says: a bull carries every such torment, and bears it without a sound.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the eye inward and names where harm really comes from. Like the scorpion whose poison is in its own body, what wounds you is carried in yourself, and the mind is the place to look: it can be a friend or it can turn into your accuser. He warns that danger comes dressed in sweetness; soft words can be a snake resting on your chest. The bull who bears every blow without complaint is held up not as a victim but as the one who learns to carry what comes, while the work of watching the mind goes on.

GATHA 2406

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the worth of remembrance

मराठी मूळ

तीथाअची अपेक्षा स्थळीं वाढे धर्म । जाणावें तें वर्म बहु पुण्य ॥1॥
 बहु बरी ऐसी भाविकांची जोडी । काळ नाही घडी जात वांयां ॥ध्रु॥
 करूनी चिंतन करवावें आणिकां । तो या जाला लोकां नाव जर्गी ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसे परउपकारी । त्यांच्या पायांवरी डोई माझी ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

At sacred places, the desire for merit increases; know this to be the secret of great virtue. Blessed indeed is the fortune of the devout; not a single moment of theirs goes to waste.

One who contemplates and inspires others to do so earns a name that echoes across the world. Says Tuka, my head is upon the feet of such selfless benefactors.

IN PLAIN WORDS

At holy places the longing for merit grows. Know this secret: there is great virtue in it. The company of the faithful is good indeed; for them not a single moment is wasted. One who remembers God, and leads others to remember too, earns a name across the world. Tuka says: such people live for the good of others. My head rests upon their feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praising the inward worth of pilgrimage and good company, not the outward show. The pull toward merit at a sacred place is itself a sign pointing to something deeper: that no moment among the faithful is ever wasted. The real saint is the one who not only remembers God but draws others into that remembrance, and so leaves a name that carries through the world. Tukaram ends by bowing his own head at the feet of these people who live for the good of others, making their service, not their fame, the thing he honors.

GATHA 2407

Ecstasy and Joy

Fearlessness after surrender

मराठी मूळ

भयाची तों आह्मां चिंतीं । राहो खंती सकेना ॥1॥
 समपिनलों जीवें भावें । काशा भ्यावें कारणें ॥ध्रु॥
 करीन तें कवतुकें । अवघें निकें शोभेल ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे माप भरूं । दिस सारूं कवतुकें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We once harbored fear and anxiety within us, but that distress cannot remain any longer. We have surrendered with body and jiva.

What cause is there now for fear? Whatever I do, I shall do it as a joyful game; everything will turn out well. Says Tuka, I shall fill the measure and pass the days in playful delight.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Once fear and worry lived in my mind. Now that grief cannot stay. I have given myself away, life and heart. What is left to be afraid of, and why? Whatever I do, I will do it as play, and all of it will turn out well. Tuka says: I will fill the measure full. I will pass my days in delight.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes what happens on the far side of surrender: fear loses its place to stand. Having handed over his very life and heart, he finds the old anxiety can no longer remain, because there is nothing left of his own to defend. From here even action changes character; what he does he does as play, trusting that it will come out well. The closing image of filling the measure full and spending his days in delight names the new tone of a life no longer ruled by dread, but lived lightly in God's keeping.

GATHA 2408

The Nature of God

The Name, God comes running

मराठी मूळ

पाचारितां धावे । ऐसी ठायींची हे सवे ॥१॥
बोले करुणा वचनीं । करी कृपा लावी स्तनीं ॥२॥
जाणे कळवळा । भावसिद्धीचा जिह्वाळा ॥३॥
तुका ह्याने नाम । मार्गे मार्गे धावे प्रेम ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When called, He comes running; that is His nature from the very beginning. He speaks words of compassion, He bestows grace, He nurses like a mother.

He knows the innermost yearning, the living warmth of a devotion fulfilled from within. Says Tuka, when the Name is uttered, love comes running close behind.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When you call him, he comes running. That has been his way from the very start. He speaks words of mercy; he shows kindness; he holds you to the breast like a mother. He knows your inmost ache, the warmth of a love made true from within. Tuka says: when the Name is spoken, love comes running close behind.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming the nature of God as a mother who cannot help but come. Calling is enough; God's settled habit is to run to the one who cries out, to speak tenderly and to nurse the soul at the breast. What moves him is not ritual correctness but the inner ache of genuine devotion, which he reads exactly. The last line lands the claim:

utter the Name and you do not get the Name only, for love itself comes running right behind it.

GATHA 2409

Confession and Sin

Confession, the sin of sloth

मराठी मूळ

कां जी माझे जीवीं । आळस ठेविला गोसावीं ॥१॥
 येवढा घात आणीक काय । चिंतनासी अंतराय ॥२॥
 देहआत्म वंदी । केला घात कुबुद्धी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने मन । कळवळी वाटे सीण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why, O Lord, have You placed laziness in my jiva? What greater harm could there be? It obstructs my contemplation of You. The body-worshipping intellect has wrought this ruin.

Says Tuka, the mind trembles and feels great pain.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why, Lord, have you set this laziness in my heart? What greater harm could there be than this? It blocks me from remembering you. The mind that worships the body has done this ruin. Tuka says: my mind aches, and I feel the pain of it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes a confession that treats sloth as no small flaw but as the gravest harm, because it stands between him and the remembrance of God. He half blames the Lord for placing it in him, then names the true source: an intellect that takes the body and its comfort as the self, and so will not bestir itself toward God. The poem points the accusation at this pattern of body-clinging laziness rather than at any other person. He ends not with excuse but with felt pain, the ache of a mind that knows it is failing the one thing that matters.

GATHA 2410

Prayers

Prayer, leaving it to God

मराठी मूळ

दर्शनाचें आर्त जीवा । बहु देवा राहिलें ॥१॥
 आतां जाणसी तें करीं । विश्वंभरीं काय उणें ॥२॥
 येथें जरी उरे चिंता । कोण दाता याहूनी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने जाणवलें । आह्मां भलें एवढेंच ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The longing in my jiva for Your darshan is immense, O God. Now do what You see fit; what can be lacking for the Sustainer of the world? If worry remains even after this, what greater benefactor could there be? Says Tuka, I have made my plea. This much is enough for us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The longing to see you, Lord, has built up huge in my heart. Now do whatever you know is best. What can be lacking for the One who holds up the world? If worry is still left after this, then who is a greater giver than you? Tuka says: I have made my plea. For us, this much is enough.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram brings a deep ache for God's sight and then lays the whole matter down at God's feet. Having confessed how strong the longing has grown, he refuses to dictate terms and asks only that God do what God knows to be right. His reasoning is simple trust: the Sustainer of all worlds can lack nothing, so if any worry still remains, the fault cannot be in God's power to give. The closing line marks the limit of the devotee's part: he has spoken his need, and that is all that is asked of him; the rest belongs to God.

GATHA 2411

The Nature of God

Intimacy, the Mother is never cold

मराठी मूळ

बैसों पाठमोरीं । मना वाटे तैसे करीं ॥१॥
परिं तूं जाणसीं आवडीं । बाळा बहुतांचीं परवडी ॥२॥
आपुलाल्या इच्छा । मागों जया व्हावें जैशा ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे आई । नव्हसी उदास विठाई ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I may sit with my back turned and act as my mind pleases. But You know the love within; You are the Mother to many children.

Each wants to ask according to his own desire and need. Says Tuka, You are not indifferent, O Mother Vithabai.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I may sit with my back turned to you and do as my mind pleases. But you know the love inside me. You are the Mother of many children. Each one asks for what he wants, in his own way and as he needs. Tuka says: you are never cold to me, Mother Vithabai.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from the freedom of a child who can sulk and turn away and still be sure of the mother's heart. Even when he sits with his back turned and follows his own moods, he knows God reads the love hidden underneath the behavior. He pictures Vitthal as a mother to countless children, each of whom comes with his own clamor and his own particular need, and none of whom is turned away. The poem rests on the certainty named at the end: Mother Vithabai is never indifferent, whatever the child does.

GATHA 2412

The Nature of God

Nature of God, all-seeing, all-hearing

मराठी मूळ

विश्वंभरा वोळे । बहुत हात कान डोळे ॥१॥
 जेथें असे तेथें देखे । मागितलें तें आइके ॥१॥
 जें जें वाटे गोड । तैसें पुरवितो कोड ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे भेटी । कांहीं पडों नेदी तुटी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The Sustainer of the world overflows with many hands, ears, and eyes. Wherever He is, He sees; whatever is asked, He hears.

Whatever seems sweet to the chitta, He fulfills that desire. Says Tuka, He never allows any break in the meeting.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The Sustainer of the world overflows. He has many hands, many ears, many eyes. Wherever he is, he sees. Whatever is asked, he hears. Whatever seems sweet to you, that longing he fulfills. Tuka says: once he meets you, he lets nothing break the meeting.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a God whose presence and attention have no edges. The image of many hands, ears, and eyes says that there is nowhere God does not see and no cry God does not hear. This God reaches into the heart's own preferences, fulfilling the very desire that seems sweet to the devotee rather than imposing something foreign. The final claim is one of constancy: once the meeting between God and soul has happened, God will not let it be cut off, so the relationship is kept unbroken from his side.

GATHA 2413

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, beyond sin and merit

मराठी मूळ

दाटे कंठ लागे डोळ्यां पाझर । गुणाची अपार वृष्ट वरी ॥१॥
 तेणें सुखें छंदें घेईन सोंहळा । होऊनि निराळा पापपुण्यां॥१॥
 तुझ्या मोहें पडो मागील विसर । आलापें सुस्वर करिन कंठ ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे येथें पाहिजे सौरस । तुझांविण रस गोड नव्हे॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My throat chokes and tears stream from my eyes; an endless rain of Your virtues pours from above. In that joy and devotion, I shall take my celebration, having become free of both sin and merit.

May Your enchantment make me forget all that came before. I shall make my throat sing sweetly in melodious verse.

Says Tuka, what I need here is intimacy. Without You, no sweetness is truly sweet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My throat chokes, tears stream from my eyes. An endless rain of your virtues pours down on me. In that joy I will take up the festival, having become free of both sin and merit. Let your love make me forget all that came before. I will tune my throat and sing you sweetly. Tuka says: what I need here is closeness. Without you, no sweetness is sweet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is caught in the bodily signs of devotional rapture: choked throat, streaming tears, the felt downpour of God's qualities. In that flood he speaks of rising past both sin and merit, not by license but because absorption in God leaves the old ledger of good and bad deeds behind. He prays for God's love to wash away all his former memory and to turn his throat into an instrument of sweet song. The poem ends by naming what alone makes any of this real: intimacy with God, for apart from God no pleasure has any sweetness at all.

GATHA 2414

Longing and Separation

Longing, arms held open

मराठी मूळ

पसरुनि राहिलों बाहो । सोयी अहो तुमचिये ॥१॥
आतां यावें लागवेगें । पांडुरंगे धांवत ॥२॥
बैसायाची इच्छा कडे । चाली खडे रुपताती ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे कृपाळुवा । करीन सेवा लागली ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have spread my arms wide, facing Your direction. Now come quickly, O Panduranga, come running.

I long to sit on Your lap; my feet stumble upon the rough stones of the path. Says Tuka, O Merciful One, the longing for Your service has taken hold of me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I stand with my arms spread wide, turned toward you. Now come quickly, Panduranga, come running. I long to sit upon your lap; the path's sharp stones cut into my feet. Tuka says: O Merciful One, the longing for your service has taken hold of me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram paints himself as a child standing with arms flung open, facing God's direction and begging Panduranga to come at a run. The wish to be lifted onto God's lap is set against the pain of the road, the rough stones cutting his feet, which gives the longing its urgency. He is not asking for ease alone but for nearness and for the chance to serve. The closing line names the force driving the whole poem: a longing for God's service has gripped him, and he can only call the Merciful One to come.

GATHA 2415

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, settling the account with God

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी जालों एकविध । सुद्या सुदें असावें ॥१॥
 यावरी तुमचा मोळा । तो गोपाळा अकळ ॥२॥
 घेतलें तें उसणें द्यावें । कांहीं भावें विशेषें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे क्रियानष्ट । तरी कष्ट घेतसां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We have become single-minded in our intent; let accounts be settled squarely. Beyond that, Your ways, O Gopala, are unfathomable.

What is borrowed must be repaid, and with some added devotion. Says Tuka, if You default on Your word, then You are the one who suffers the loss.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We have become single-minded toward you. Let what is plain be kept plain; let the account be settled straight. Beyond that, your ways, Gopala, no one can fathom. What was borrowed must be paid back, and with some added love. Tuka says: if you break your word, then it is you who bears the loss.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses his claim on God in the bold language of a debt to be settled. Having given God his whole single-minded heart, he asks for a straight reckoning, even while admitting that God's deeper ways are beyond anyone's grasp. The devotee's logic is that of a loan: what God has taken in love must be returned, and returned with interest of love. The closing line keeps the daring edge intact: if God should default on the bargain, the loss falls on God, for a Lord who fails his devotee damages his own name.

GATHA 2416

Longing and Separation

Longing, the complaint of the abandoned

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी आर्तभूत जिवीं । तुह्मी गोसावी तों उदास ॥१॥
 वादावाद समर्थार्थीं । काशानशीं करावा ॥२॥
 आह्मी मरों वेरझारीं । स्वामी घरीं बैसले ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे करितां वाद । कांहीं भेद कळेना ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We are desperate and yearning within us, while You, O Lord, sit in comfortable detachment. What is the point of arguing with the Capable One? We are perishing out in the wilderness while the Master sits comfortably at home.

Says Tuka, the more I argue, the less I understand any difference.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We are aching and desperate inside. You, Lord, sit untouched and at ease. What is the use of arguing with the All-powerful? We are dying out in the wilderness while the Master sits at home. Tuka says: the more I argue, the less I can see any difference it makes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram voices the raw complaint of one who suffers while God seems calm and far off. He sets the burning, desperate heart of the devotee against the Lord who sits in untroubled comfort, and admits how unequal the contest is: what can a helpless soul gain by quarreling with the All-powerful? The image of perishing in the wilderness while the Master stays safe at home gives the grievance its sting. Yet the poem ends in honest exhaustion rather than resolution, confessing that all the arguing changes nothing he can see, which is itself a kind of surrender wrung out of longing.

GATHA 2417

The Necessity of Experience

Self-inquiry, words against the root

मराठी मूळ

पुसावें तें ठाई आपुल्या आपण । अहंकारा शून्य घालूनियां ॥१॥
 येर वाग्जाळ मायेचा अहंकार । वचनाशीं थार अज्ञान तें ॥२॥
 फळ तें चि बीज बीज तें ची फळ । उपनांवें मूळ न पालटे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे अवघे गव्हांचे प्रकार । सोनें अलंकार मिथ्या नांव ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Ask yourself, within yourself, having emptied the ego. All other verbal webs are the ego of Maya.

Such wordiness is a shelter for ignorance. The fruit is the seed, and the seed is the fruit; at the root, the names change nothing.

Says Tuka, all are forms of wheat. Gold and its ornaments bear different names, but the substance is one.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Ask the thing where it lives, in yourself, by yourself. First empty out the ego. Everything else is a tangle of words; it is the ego of Maya. Such wordiness is only a hiding place for ignorance. The fruit is the seed, and the seed is the fruit. The names change, but the root does not change. Tuka says: it is all forms of wheat. Gold and its ornaments carry different names, but the substance is one; the names are false.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is telling the seeker where the real question gets answered and what blocks it. The answer lies within, but only after the ego has been set aside; as long as it remains, all the clever talk is just Maya wearing the mask of words, a shelter where ignorance can hide. He drives the point home with two images. Fruit and seed are one thing under two names, and gold stays gold whether you call it a bangle or a chain; the labels shift while the substance never does. So he is warning against mistaking the changing names for the unchanging reality, and against using argument as a substitute for emptying the self.

GATHA 2418

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the holy claim on God

मराठी मूळ

माझी आतां सत्ता आहे । तुह्यां पायां हे वरती ॥१॥
 एकाविण नेणें दुजा । पंढरिराजा सर्वांगें ॥२॥
 पुरवावी केली आळी । जे जे काळीं मागण तें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सुटसी कैसा । धरुनि दिशा राहिलों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My authority now rests entirely at Your feet. I know no one else but You, O King of Pandhari, with my whole being.

Fulfill whatever plea I make, at every turn. Says Tuka, how will You escape me? I have taken my position in every direction.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now I hold a right; it rests here, upon Your feet. I know no second one. O King of Pandhari, You fill my whole being. Grant the demand I have made, whatever I ask, whenever I ask it. Tuka says: how will You get free of me? I have taken hold of every direction, and there I stay.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns surrender into a kind of loving siege. Because he knows no one but the King of Pandhari and has placed himself wholly at His feet, he claims that very surrender as a right: God now owes him an answer to every plea. The closing lines are playful and fierce at once; he has blocked every exit and asks how Vitthal could possibly escape him. The stakes are the devotee's confidence that total dependence is not weakness but a hold on God that He cannot shake off.

GATHA 2419

Longing and Separation

Longing, arrived at last to settle accounts

मराठी मूळ

फावलें तुह्मां मागें । नवतों लागें पावलों ॥1॥
 आलों आतां उभा राहें । जवळी पाहें सन्मुख ॥ध्रु॥
 घरीं होती गोवी जाली । कामें बोली न घडे चि ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे धडफुडा । जालों झाडा देई देवा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*You had it easy before; I had not yet arrived. Now I have come.**Stand still and face me. I was caught up in household affairs, and speech could not flow freely.**Says Tuka, now I have become decisive. Give me a clear account, O God.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

You had it easy before, while I had not yet come; now I have arrived. Stand still and face me; let me see You close, before me. There were entanglements at home; the work kept me from speaking freely. Tuka says: now I have become plain and ready. I have come to settle the account. Give it to me, O God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks like a man who has finally cleared his obligations and arrived to face God directly. While he was tangled in household duties, God had it easy and could keep His distance; now that he has come, he asks Him to stand still and be seen face to face. He calls himself decisive and demands a clear reckoning, a settling of the account between them. The stakes are the moment of full presence: the devotee will no longer let domestic distraction or God's evasions postpone the meeting.

GATHA 2420

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, a child asking not to be tested

मराठी मूळ

आतां नये बोलों अद्देराची मात । बाळावरि चित्त असों घावें ॥1॥
 तुज कां सांगणें लागे हा प्रकार । परि हें उत्तर आवडीचें ॥ध्रु॥
 न वंचीं वो कांहीं एकही प्रकार । आपणां अंतर नका मज ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे मोहो राखावा सतंत । नये पाहों अंत पांडुरंगा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now do not speak words of neglect. Let Your attention remain upon this child.

Why should it be necessary to tell You this? Yet these words come from deep affection. Do not withhold anything, not even a single gesture.

Do not put distance between Yourself and me. Says Tuka, keep this loving bond perpetual, O Panduranga. Do not test my patience.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now do not speak words of neglect. Keep Your attention on this child. Why should I have to tell You this? Yet these are words of love. Do not hold back even one small thing from me; put no distance between Yourself and me. Tuka says: keep this bond of love unbroken always. Do not test me to the end, O Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pleads with God as a child pleads with a parent who might look away. He asks Vitthal not to speak of neglect and to keep watching over him, then admits that such a reminder should not even be necessary; it comes only from the ache of affection. He begs that nothing be withheld and no distance opened, and that the loving bond never be allowed to lapse. The closing line names the real fear: do not test my patience to its limit, for a soul this dependent cannot bear to be made to wait.

GATHA 2421

Devotion to Vitthal

Bhakti over knowledge, no easy liberation

मराठी मूळ

करुनि राहों जरी आत्मा चि प्रमाण । निश्चळ नव्हे मन काय करुं ॥1॥
 जेवलिया विण काशाचे ढेंकर । शब्दाचे प्रकार शब्द चि ते ॥ध्रु॥
 पुरे पुरे आतां तुमचें ब्रह्मज्ञान । आह्वासी चरण न सोडणें ॥2॥
 विरोधें विरोध वाढे पुढतोपुढती । वासनेचे हातीं गर्भवास ॥3॥
 सांडीमांडीअंगीं वसे पुण्यपाप । बंधन संकल्प या चि नांवें ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं मुक्तता मोकळी । ऐसा कोण बळी निरसी देह ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even if I resolve to make the Self my only truth, the mind will not stay still. What can I do? Without actually eating, what is the value of a belch? The ways of words remain merely words.

Enough, enough of your Brahma-knowledge. We will not let go of His feet.

Conflict only breeds more conflict, endlessly. The womb of rebirth lies in the hands of lingering desire.

Merit and demerit cling to the body; bondage is the very name of mental resolve. Says Tuka, there is no such thing as easy, outright liberation. Who is powerful enough to truly transcend the body?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Even if I resolve to make the Self alone my truth, the mind will not hold still. What can I do? Without eating, what is a belch worth? Words about words are only words. Enough, enough now of your Brahma-knowledge. We will not let go of His feet. Conflict only breeds more conflict, on and on. Rebirth in the womb lies in the hands of lingering desire. Merit and demerit cling to the body; mental resolve itself is the very name of bondage. Tuka says: there is no easy, ready-made liberation. Who is strong enough to truly be done with the body?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram refuses dry knowledge in favor of holding fast to God's feet. He grants that one may declare the Self the only reality, but the mind still will not settle, and he mocks talk without realization: a belch without a meal, words that are only more words. So he pushes the abstract Brahma-knowledge aside and clings to Vitthal instead. Then he names the trap honestly. Argument breeds more argument, desire keeps pulling the soul back into the womb, merit and demerit both stick to the body, and even the mind's resolve is itself a form of bondage. The stakes are sobering: liberation is not a cheap trick of thought, and almost no one is strong enough to be truly free of the body on their own. The unspoken conclusion is that only surrender to God's feet remains.

GATHA 2422

Prayers

Prayer, longing for the saints' leavings

मराठी मूळ

तुमचे स्तुतियोग्य कोटें माझी वाणी । मस्तक चरणीं ठेवीतसें ॥१॥
 भक्तिभाग्य तरी नेदीं तुळसीदळ । जोडूनि अंजुळ उभा असें ॥२॥
 कैचें भाग्य ऐसें पाविजे संनिध । नेणें पाळूं विध करुणा भाकीं ॥३॥
 संतांचे सेवटीं उच्छष्टाची आस । करुनियां वास पाहातसें ॥४॥
 करीं इच्छा मज ह्मणोत आपुलें । एखादिया बोलें निमित्याच्या ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे शरण आलों हें साधन । करितों चिंतन रात्रदिवस ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My tongue is not worthy of praising You. I place my head at Your feet.

If devotion were my destiny, I would offer even a tulsi leaf. With folded hands, I stand before You.

What fortune could bring me so close to You? I do not know how to observe proper form; I simply cry for mercy. At the end of the saints' feast, I wait, hoping for a taste of their leftover grace.

My one desire is that someone call me their own, even through a chance word. Says Tuka, having come to You in surrender, that is my spiritual practice. I contemplate You day and night.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My tongue is not worthy to praise You. I lay my head at Your feet. If devotion were my portion, I would offer even one tulsi leaf. With folded hands I stand before You. What fortune could let me come so near? I do not know how to keep the proper forms; I only cry for mercy. At the end of the saints' feast I wait, longing for a taste of their leftovers. My one wish is that someone call me their own, even by a chance word. Tuka says: I have come to You in surrender, and that is my whole practice. I think of You night and day.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram approaches God as one with nothing to offer but need. He confesses his tongue cannot praise worthily and he does not know the correct rituals; all he can do is bow and beg for mercy. He reaches not even for God directly but for the saints' leftovers, hoping a scrap of their grace might fall to him, and he aches for someone, anyone, to claim him as their own. The point is that surrender and ceaseless remembrance are themselves his only spiritual practice; he stakes everything on humility and the company of the holy rather than on his own worthiness.

GATHA 2423

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the one profit secured

मराठी मूळ

सर्वविशीं आह्मीं हे चि जोडी केली । स्वीमीची साधिली चरणसेवा ॥१॥
 पाहिलें चि नाहीं मागें परतोनी । जिंकिला तो क्षणीं क्षण काळ ॥२॥
 नाहीं पडों दिला विचाराचा गोवा । नाहीं पाठी हेवा येऊं दिला ॥३॥
 केला लाग वेगीं अवघी चि तांतडी । भावना ते कुडी दुराविली ॥४॥
 कोठें मग ऐसें होतें सावकास । जळो तया आस वेव्हाराची ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे लाभ घेतला पालवीं । आतां नाहीं गोवी कशाची ही ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In all our endeavors, this alone is what we have achieved: we have secured service at the Lord's feet. We never once looked back.

Every moment and every instant was conquered in the act. We allowed no entanglement of deliberation to delay us.

We did not let envy come from behind. We pressed forward with all urgency and speed, banishing every false impulse.

Where then was there time for leisure? Let the craving for worldly dealings burn. Says Tuka, the profit has been tucked safely in our garment. Now there is no entanglement of any kind.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In all our striving, this alone is what we gained: we secured service at the Lord's feet. We never once looked back. Every moment, every instant, was won in the doing. We let no tangle of deliberation slow us down. We let no envy come at us from behind. We pressed forward with all haste and speed, and drove off every false impulse. Where then was there room for leisure? Let the craving for worldly dealings burn. Tuka says: the profit is tucked safe in the fold of our garment. Now there is no entanglement of any kind.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the seeking life as a single decisive transaction that has now paid off. The one gain worth having was service at God's feet, and it was won by refusing to look back, by moving fast, and by letting no second thought, no envy, no false feeling get in the way. He treats hesitation and worldly business as enemies and wishes the craving for them burned away. The closing image makes the win concrete: the profit is tucked safely into the fold of his garment, and the soul is now free of every entanglement. The stakes are wholehearted urgency: half-measures and deliberation lose what single-minded surrender secures.

GATHA 2424

Prayers

Prayer, every sense given to God

मराठी मूळ

येणें मुखें तुझे वणाअ गुण नाम । तें चि मज प्रेम देई देवा ॥१॥
 डोळे भरुनियां पाहें तुजें मुख । तें चि मज सुख देई देवा ॥२॥
 कान भरुनियां ऐकें तुझी कीर्ती । ते मज विश्रांती देई देवा ॥३॥
 वाहें रंगीं टाळी नाचेन उदास । हें देई हातांस पायां बळ ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझा सकळ देहभाव । आणीक नको ठाव चिंतूं यासी ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

With this mouth, let me praise Your qualities and Name. Grant me that love, O God.

Let my eyes drink in the sight of Your face. Grant me that joy, O God.

Let my ears be filled with Your glory. Grant me that peace, O God.

Let my hands clap in rapture and my feet dance in abandon; give these limbs the strength to serve. Says Tuka, let my entire bodily existence be for this alone. Let my mind seek no other dwelling.

IN PLAIN WORDS

With this mouth let me speak Your qualities and Your Name. Grant me that love, O God. Let my eyes fill with the sight of Your face. Grant me that joy, O God. Let my ears be filled with Your glory. Grant me that rest, O God. Let me clap my hands in the rapture and dance free of all care; give my hands and feet that strength. Tuka says: let my whole bodily being be for this alone. Let my mind look for no other dwelling.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram offers God his entire body, sense by sense, asking that each be turned wholly toward Him. The mouth is for the Name, the eyes for His face, the ears for His glory, the hands and feet for clapping and dancing in worship; and for each he asks the matching gift of love, joy, rest, and strength. He does not want these senses for any other use. The closing lines name the stake: the whole bodily existence is to be devoted to God alone, and the mind is to seek no other home, so that nothing in him is left over for the world.

GATHA 2425

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, God as the only refuge

मराठी मूळ

तूं माझा मायबाप सकळ वित्त गोत । तूं चि माझें हित करिता देवा ॥१॥
 तूं चि माझा देव तूं चि माझा जीव । तूं चि माझा भाव पांडुरंगा ॥२॥
 तूं चि माझा आचार तूं चि माझा विचार । तूं चि सर्व भार चालविसी ॥३॥
 सर्व भावें मज तूं होसी प्रमाण । ऐसी तुझी आण वाहातुसें ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुज विकला जीवभाव । कळे तो उपाव करीं आतां ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You are my mother and father, my entire wealth and kin. You alone are the one who ensures my welfare, O God.

You are my God, You are my life, You are my very devotion, O Panduranga. You are my conduct, You are my reflection, You carry my every burden.

In every way, You are my sole authority. I swear by You that this is so.

Says Tuka, I have sold You my life and jiva. Now do whatever You deem fit.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You are my mother and father, all my wealth and kin. You alone are the one who works my good, O God. You alone are my God, You alone are my life, You alone are my devotion, O Panduranga. You are my conduct, You are my thought, You carry my every burden. In every way You are my one authority; this I swear by You. Tuka says: I have sold You my very life and self. Now do whatever You see fit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram empties himself of every other support and names God as all of them at once: parent, wealth, kin, life, devotion, conduct, even his own thinking. There is nothing left that he claims as his own doing; God carries the whole burden and is his single authority. The closing line completes the surrender as an absolute sale: he has handed over his life and self entirely, and tells Panduranga to do with him whatever He judges best. The stakes are total dependence, a soul with no fallback outside of God.

GATHA 2426

Longing and Separation

Longing, pleading with the life of the universe

मराठी मूळ

वारंवार तुज द्यावया आठव । ऐक तो भाव माझा कैसा ॥१॥
 गेले मग नये फिरोन दिवस । पुडिलांची आस गणित नाहीं ॥२॥
 गुणां अवगुणांचे पडती आघात । तेणें होय चित्त कासावीस ॥३॥
 कांहीं एक तुझा न देखों आधार । ह्मणऊनी धीर नाहीं जीवा ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे तूं ब्रह्मांडाचा जीव । तरी कां आह्मी कींव भाकीतसों ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I keep reminding You again and again. Hear the nature of my devotion.

Days once gone do not return; there is no counting on the future. Blows of fortune and misfortune strike constantly, making the mind restless.

I see no sign of Your support anywhere, and so the jiva has no courage. Says Tuka, You are the life of the universe. Then why must we keep pleading for Your compassion?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Again and again I keep reminding You. Hear the nature of my devotion. Days once gone do not come back; the future cannot be counted on. Blows of good and bad fortune keep falling, and the mind is left in distress. I see no sign of Your support anywhere, and so the jiva has no courage. Tuka says: You are the life of the whole universe. Then why must we keep begging You for Your compassion?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses his case to God with growing urgency, asking Him to hear how he truly feels. He names the pressure of time: spent days never return, the future is uncertain, and the constant strokes of fortune leave the mind in turmoil. Worst of all, he sees no visible sign of God's support, and without it the soul loses heart. The closing line carries a near-complaint with deep faith inside it: if God is the very life of the universe, it should not take so much begging to win His mercy. The stakes are the ache of a devotee who believes utterly yet feels left without any felt assurance.

GATHA 2427

*The Power of the Name**The Name, God comes for the kirtan*

मराठी मूळ

असोत हे तुझे प्रकार सकळ । काय खळखळ करावी हे ॥1॥
 आमुचें स्वहित जाणतसों आह्मी । तुझें वर्म नामीं आहे तुझ्या ॥ध्रु॥
 विचारितां आयुष्य जातें वांयांविण । रोज जन्मा गोवण पडतसे ॥2॥
 राहेन मी तुझे पाय आठवूनी । आणीक तें मनीं येऊं नेदीं ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे येथें येसी अनायासें । थोर तुज पिसें कीर्तनाचें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let all Your ways be as they are; why should I fret and argue? We know our own welfare. Your secret lies in Your own Name.

When I consider it, life is passing away to no purpose; day by day, one gets tangled further in the net of birth. I shall remain remembering Your feet and allow nothing else to enter my mind.

Says Tuka, You come here effortlessly when kirtan is performed; You have a great passion for it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let all Your ways be whatever they are; why should I make a fuss and argue? We know our own good. Your secret lies in Your own Name. When I think about it, life is wasting away to no purpose; day by day one gets tangled deeper in the net of birth. I will stay remembering Your feet and let nothing else enter my mind.

Tuka says: You come here without effort when kirtan is sung. You have a great madness for it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram drops all argument about God's mysterious ways and goes straight for what works. He does not need to debate; he knows where his good lies, and the open secret of God is His own Name. He sees clearly that life slips away uselessly and that each day binds him further to the cycle of birth, so he resolves to keep his mind on God's feet alone. The closing line lands the claim with affectionate confidence: God comes effortlessly wherever His Name is sung, because He has a wild fondness for kirtan. The point is that the Name and the kirtan, not clever inquiry into God's conduct, are the sure path.

GATHA 2428

Longing and Separation

Complaint, the servant who still suffers

मराठी मूळ

विष्णुदासां भोग । जरी आह्मां पीडी रोग ॥१॥
 तरि हें दिसे लाजिरवाणें । काय तुह्मांसी सांगणें ॥२॥
 आह्मां काळें खावें । बोलिलें तें वायां जावें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे दास । आह्मी भोगूं गर्भवास ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If we who call ourselves servants of Vishnu are still afflicted by disease, then this is truly embarrassing. What need is there to tell You? If we must eat filth and our words go to waste, if we who claim to be Your servants must still endure the womb, then says Tuka, something is deeply amiss.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If we who are servants of Vishnu are still struck down by disease, then it looks shameful. What is there to say to You? If we must eat what is dark and bitter, then all that was spoken goes to waste. Tuka says: we are Your servants, and yet we go on suffering the womb of rebirth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lodges a frank, almost reproachful complaint with God on behalf of His own devotees. If those who call themselves servants of Vishnu still fall sick, suffer hard portions, and keep being thrown back into the cycle of birth, then it makes both servant and master look bad. He is not doubting God so much as holding Him to His word: the promises made to devotees seem to go to waste if their lives differ so little from anyone else's. The stakes are the honor of the relationship itself; a servant's suffering reflects on the Lord he serves, and Tukaram is daring to say so out loud.

GATHA 2429

Appeals and Exhortations

The simplest path to God

मराठी मूळ

भावें गावें गीत । शुद्ध करुनियां चित्त ॥१॥
 तुज व्हावा आहे देव । तरि हा सुलभ उपाव ॥२॥
 आणिकांचे कानीं । गुण दोष मना नाणीं ॥३॥
 मस्तक ठेंगणा । करी संतांच्या चरणा ॥४॥
 वेचीं तें वचन । जेणें राहे समाधान ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे फार । थोडा तरी पर उपकार ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Sing the divine song with devotion, purifying the mind. If you truly want God, this is the simplest path.

Do not bring the faults and virtues of others into your mind through your ears. Bow your head low before the feet of the saints.

Spend only those words that bring peace to the chitta. Says Tuka, render service to others, whether great or small.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sing the song with love, and make your mind clean first. If you truly want God, this is the easy way. Do not let other people's faults and merits into your ears, and do not turn them over in your mind. Bow your head low at the feet of the saints. Spend only the words that leave the heart at peace. Tuka says: do others some good, even a little if not much.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out a path simple enough that no one can claim it is beyond them. Wanting God is the only requirement; the method is to sing with feeling, clean the mind, and stop letting gossip about who is good and who is bad take up room inside. He adds three small disciplines: bow low to the saints, speak only words that leave others at peace, and be useful to people even in small ways. The point is that devotion is not an elaborate technique but a few plain habits anyone can begin today.

GATHA 2430

The Moral Ideal

Words wound; ego invites God

मराठी मूळ

वचन तें नाही तोडीत शरीरा । भेदत अंतरा वज्रा- ऐसें ॥१॥
 कांहीं न सहावें काशा करणें । संदेह निधान देह बळी ॥२॥
 नाही शब्द मुखीं लागत तिखट । नाही जड होत पोट तेणें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जरी गिळे अहंकार । तरी वसे घर नारायण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Words do not cut the body, yet they pierce the inner being like a thunderbolt. Nothing else should be endured for any reason.

The body, that stronghold of doubt, is powerful. Words do not taste sharp in the mouth, nor do they make the belly heavy.

Says Tuka, if one can swallow the ego, Narayana takes up residence in the home.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A word does not cut the body, yet it pierces the inner being like a thunderbolt. This above all must not be endured; why even do such a thing? A sharp word leaves no taste in the mouth, and it does not make the belly heavy. Tuka says: if you can swallow your own ego, then Narayana comes to live in the house.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram weighs a harsh word and finds it both nothing and everything. It costs the speaker nothing, no taste on the tongue, no weight in the stomach, yet it strikes the listener's inmost being like a thunderbolt, so cruel speech is the one thing he says should never be inflicted. Then he turns the knife inward: the same tongue that wounds others is driven by ego. Swallow that ego, hold the sharp word back, and the house you have emptied of pride becomes a place where Narayana can dwell.

GATHA 2431

The Moral Ideal

Truth lets no fraud slip through

मराठी मूळ

नव्हो आतां जीवीं कपटवसती । मग काकुळती कोणा यावें ॥1॥
 सत्याचिये मापें गांठीं नये नाड । आदि अंत गोड नारायण ॥ध्रु॥
 चोखटिया नाहीं विटाळाचा आघात । साच ते साचांत सांचा पडे ॥2॥
 विचारिली वाट उसंत सीतळ । बुद्धीपुढें बळ तृणतुल्य ॥3॥
 आहाराच्या घासें पचोनियां जिरे । वासना ही उरे उर्वरीत ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे ताळा घालावा वचनीं । तूं माझी जननी पांडुरंगे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let no more deceit dwell in the chitta. Then whom would one need to beg? When the measure of truth is applied, no fraud can slip through.

Narayana is sweet from beginning to end. The truly clean one is untouched by pollution; the genuine naturally falls into the genuine mold.

The path of reflection is cool and restful. Before wisdom, brute strength is no more than a blade of grass.

Even the food one eats is digested and absorbed, but residual desire still lingers. Says Tuka, let me put the lock of silence on my lips. You are my Mother, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let no more deceit live in my heart now; then I will not have to beg anyone for help. When the measure of truth is used, no fraud passes through the knot. Narayana is sweet from beginning to end. The clean one takes no wound from pollution; the genuine settles into the genuine mould. The path I have thought through is cool and restful. Before clear understanding, brute strength is light as a blade of grass. The food I eat is digested and passes, but desire still stays behind. Tuka says: let me lock my lips in silence. You are my mother, Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes inner honesty the whole of his practice. Once deceit no longer lives in the heart, he owes nothing and need plead with no one; truth is a measure fine enough that no falsehood can slip through it, and the genuine soul slides naturally into the mould of the genuine. He notices that food is eaten and digested away, but craving outlasts the body, so the real work is on desire, not on the belly. The path of reflection he has chosen is cool and

restful, and before clear understanding sheer force counts for nothing. He ends by asking for the lock of silence and calling Panduranga his mother, leaning on God the way a child leans, not as a strategy but as the last truth left.

GATHA 2432

The Necessity of Experience

These words are God's, not mine

मराठी मूळ

नव्हती हीं माझीं जायाचीं भूषणें । असे नारायणें उचित केलें ॥१॥
 शब्दाच्या वोवोनी रत्नाचिया माळा । मुळींच जिह्वाळा झरवणी ॥२॥
 अर्थातरीं असे अनुभवसेवन । परिपाकीं मन साक्ष येथें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज सरतें परतें । हें नाहीं अनंतें उरों दिलें ॥३॥
 उपक्रमें वदे निशब्दाची वाणी । जे कोठें बंधनीं गुंपों नेणें ॥४॥
 तम नासी परि वेव्हारा वेगळा । रविप्रभाकळा वर्ते जन ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे येथें गेला अतिशय । आतां पुन्हा नये तोंड दावूं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

These are not my ornaments nor my wife's finery. Narayana has bestowed them as He saw fit.

Stringing words like garlands of gems, the original living warmth flows from the source. Within the layers of meaning lies the savor of direct experience; the ripened mind bears witness.

Says Tuka, the Infinite One has not allowed anything to remain unsettled for me. The voice speaks of the unspeakable through its beginning; it knows no bondage anywhere.

Darkness is destroyed, yet He stands apart from worldly transactions; the world moves by the sun's light. Says Tuka, here all excess has departed. Now the face should not show itself again.

IN PLAIN WORDS

These ornaments are not mine, nor my wife's finery; Narayana has given them as he thought fit. The words strung like garlands of gems flow from the living warmth at the source. Inside their meaning is the taste of real experience; the ripened mind is the witness. Tuka says: the Infinite One has left nothing unsettled for me. The voice speaks the unspeakable from the start, and knows no bondage anywhere. Darkness is destroyed, yet he stands apart from the world's dealings, while people move by the sun's light. Tuka says: here every excess is gone. Now this face need not show itself again.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram disowns his own poems even as he speaks them. The verses, strung like jewelled garlands, are not his ornaments to be proud of; Narayana gave them, and the warmth that runs through them rises from the source, not from Tuka. He says the words carry the taste of direct experience, and his ripened mind is only the witness, not the author. With nothing left unsettled by the Infinite, the ego that would step forward to take credit has burned away; like the sun that destroys darkness yet stays apart from what it lights, God works through him without belonging to the transaction. The closing line, that this face need not appear again, is the disappearance of the self that wanted to be seen.

GATHA 2433

*The Necessity of Experience**Caught by God, beyond argument*

मराठी मूळ

बोलाल या आतां आपुल्यापुरतें । मज या अनंतें गोवियेलें ॥१॥
झाडिला न सोडी हातींचा पालव । वेधी वेधें जीव वेधियेला ॥२॥
तुमचे ते शब्द कोरडिया गोष्टी । मज सवें मिठी अंगसंगें ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे तुम्हां होईल हे परी । अनुभव वरी येईल मग ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Speak now for yourselves. As for me, the Infinite One has claimed me.**Though I shake Him off, He will not release the hem of my garment. He has pierced my jiva with an irresistible enchantment.**Your words are dry, mere talk. But I have His embrace, body to body.**Says Tuka, you too will experience this in time. The proof will come to the surface eventually.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Speak now only for yourselves; as for me, the Infinite One has tied me up. Shake him as I may, he will not let go of the hem of my garment; he has pierced my soul through and through. Your words are dry, just talk; I have his embrace, body to body. Tuka says: you too will know this one day, when the proof rises up in you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers people who argue with him about God by saying argument is beside the point. He has been seized: the Infinite holds the hem of his garment and will not let go however he shakes, and the soul itself has been pierced through. Against that, the others' clever words are dry, secondhand talk, while what he has is direct contact, body to body. He does not scorn the doubters but tells them their turn will come; the only real answer to this is the experience itself, and it will surface in them in time.

GATHA 2434

*The Necessity of Experience**Divine madness, keep your distance*

मराठी मूळ

जैशा तुम्ही दुरी आहां । तैशा राहा अंतरें ॥१॥
नका येऊं देऊं आळ । अंगीं गोपाळ जडलासे ॥२॥
अवघा हा चि राखा काळ । विक्राळ चि भोंवता ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे मज ऐशा । होतां पिशा जगनिंघ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Stay as far away as you are. Keep your distance.

Do not come and bring blame upon me. Gopala is fastened to my being.

Guard yourselves against this Time; the fearsome one prowls all around. Says Tuka, seeing me in this state of divine madness, the world condemns me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Stay as far off as you already are; keep your distance. Do not come and lay blame on me: Gopala is fastened to my body. Guard yourselves against this Time; the terrible one prowls all around. Tuka says: seeing me in this state, a madman, the world condemns me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram waves off the people who crowd in to judge him. He tells them to keep the distance they already keep, because God, Gopala, is fastened to his very body, and their blame cannot reach what God has claimed. He turns their warning back on them: it is they who should be on guard, for fearsome Time prowls around everyone. He knows the world calls him mad and condemns him for it, and he accepts the name; the madness is simply that God has taken him over, and that is not something the onlookers' opinion can touch.

GATHA 2435

Faith and Trust

The vow that costs your life

मराठी मूळ

सतीचें तें घेतां वाण । बहु कठीण परिणामीं ॥१॥
 जिवासाठीं गौरव वाढे । आहाच जोडे तें नव्हे ॥२॥
 जरि होय उघडी दृष्ट । तरि गोष्टी युद्धाच्या ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे अंगा येतां । तरी सत्ता धैर्याची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

To take up the vow of a sati is exceedingly hard in the end. True glory grows only through the sacrifice of one's life; it is not cheaply won.

If one's gaze is open and clear, then the real battles begin. Says Tuka, when the moment arrives, the power of courage shows itself.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To take up the sati's vow is very hard in the end. Glory grows only by laying down your life; it is not won cheaply. If the eyes are open and clear, then the real battles begin. Tuka says: when the moment comes to the body, then the power of courage shows itself.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures the cost of the spiritual path against the most extreme vow he can name, the sati who gives her whole life. Real glory, he says, is not won cheaply; it grows only where life itself is offered. To see clearly is not the end of the struggle but its beginning, because clear sight opens onto the real battles. The closing line is sober

rather than boastful: courage is not proven in talk but only when the moment actually reaches the body, when the demand becomes real and a person either has the power to stand or does not.

GATHA 2436

The Nature of God

God fills all; untangle craving

मराठी मूळ

आडवा तो उभा । असे दाटोनियां प्रभा ॥१॥
 देव नाही एकविध । एक भाव असे शुद्ध ॥२॥
 भेदाभेद आटी । नाही फार कोठें तुटी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे गोवा । उगवा वेव्हाराचा हेवा ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Horizontally, vertically, His radiance stands filling everything. God is not a single, simple thing; only pure devotion is single and constant.

The effort to resolve difference and non-difference, there is not too much distance or too much severance anywhere. Says Tuka, untangle the knot of worldly craving and desire.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sideways and upright, his light stands crowding everything full. God is not just one plain thing; only pure devotion is single and constant. The struggle of difference and no-difference: there is no great gap anywhere, no real break. Tuka says: untangle the knot, undo the craving for worldly dealings.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sees God's radiance packed into every direction, filling all space, so that God is not some single object set apart from the rest. What stays single and constant is not God reduced to one form but the devotion that holds steady. He waves away the endless dispute over whether the soul and God are different or not different, saying there is no real gap and no real break to fight over. The one thing that needs doing, then, is practical, not theoretical: untangle the knot of craving for worldly transactions, because that craving, not any metaphysical distance, is what keeps a person from the God who already fills everything.

GATHA 2437

True Worship

The mark without the testing

मराठी मूळ

एका बोटाची निशाणी । परीपाख नाही मनीं ॥१॥
 तरिं तें संपादिलें सोंग । कारणावांचूनियां वेंग ॥२॥
 वैष्णवांचा धर्म । जग विष्णु नेणे वर्म ॥३॥
 अतिशयें पाप । तुका सत्य करी माप ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A mark is made with one finger, but there is no real testing in the mind. Then it is all a performance, an embrace without any cause.

The dharma of the Vaishnavas is that the whole world is Vishnu, but people do not know this secret. Says Tuka, where sin is excessive, truth becomes the measuring standard.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A mark made with one finger, but no real testing in the mind. Then the whole thing is a costume put on, an embrace with no reason behind it. The Vaishnava's dharma is this: the whole world is Vishnu; people do not know the secret. Tuka says: where sin is great, truth is the measure that weighs it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks at outward religion and finds it hollow when the inside is empty. A devotee can paint the sect-mark on the forehead with one finger, but if the mind has done no real self-examination, the mark is only a costume and the show of devotion is an embrace with nothing behind it. The real Vaishnava dharma he names is to see the whole world as Vishnu, a secret the world walks past. He warns that the gesture cannot hide the heart: where sin runs deep, it is truth, not the painted mark, that does the weighing, and the measure is exact.

GATHA 2438

The Necessity of Experience

Devotion proven slowly, by truth

मराठी मूळ

सत्यत्वेंशीं घेणें भक्तीचा अनुभव । स्वामीचा गौरव इच्छीतसें ॥१॥
मग तें अवीट न भंगे साचारें । पावलें विस्तारें फिरों नेणे ॥२॥
वाणी वदे त्याचा कोणांसी विश्वास । अभयें करें दास सत्य तई ॥३॥
तुका ह्याने आधीं न करीं तांतडी । पायीं जाली जोडी तेणें शुद्ध ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The experience of devotion must be taken with truth. I desire the glory of my Lord.

Then that experience is inexhaustible, never breaking, never turning back once it has spread. Whose words can be trusted? Only when one's actions confirm it does the servant become truly free of fear.

Says Tuka, do not be hasty in the beginning. The foundation that is laid at His feet must be clean.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The taste of devotion must be taken with truth; I long for the glory of my Lord. Then it cannot be spoiled or broken; once it spreads, it does not know how to turn back. Whose words can be trusted? Only when the deeds confirm them does the servant become truly fearless. Tuka says: do not be in a hurry at the start. The bond made at his feet must be a clean one.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram insists that devotion only counts when it is held with truth, and warns against rushing it. Taken honestly, the taste of devotion is inexhaustible; once it spreads through a person it cannot be spoiled, broken, or reversed. But words alone earn no trust; a servant becomes truly fearless only when actions back the words up. So he cautions himself and the listener not to hurry at the beginning: the bond laid at God's feet has to be clean from the start, because a foundation built fast and false will not hold the weight that true devotion brings.

GATHA 2439

Devotion to Vitthal

Begging to stay God's debtor

मराठी मूळ

सर्वात्मकपण । माझें हिरोनि नेतो कोण ॥१॥
 मनीं भक्तीची आवडी । हेवा व्हावी ऐशी जोडी ॥२॥
 घेईन जन्मांतरे । हें चि करावया खरें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याणे देवा । ऋणी करुनि ठेवूं सेवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Who can steal from me the sense of being present in all? My mind's desire is devotion; I wish for such a treasure that others might envy. I will take births again and again to make this real.

Says Tuka, O God, let me keep You in my debt through service.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Who can take from me this sense of being present in all things? My mind's one love is devotion; I want such a treasure that others would envy it. I will take birth after birth just to make this real. Tuka says: O God, let me keep serving you, so that you stay forever in my debt.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram guards a single possession that no one can steal: the sense of God present in everything. Devotion is his mind's whole desire, and he wants it so richly that it would be the envy of others, a holy greed for the one worthwhile thing. He is willing to be born again and again, not to escape rebirth but to keep living this out. The closing turn is striking: instead of asking God to repay him, he asks to keep serving so that God remains in his debt, because for the lover the joy is in the giving, and to owe God nothing while God owes you would end the very service he treasures.

GATHA 2440

Social Criticism

Social criticism, swans not crows

मराठी मूळ

आणितां त्या गती । हंस काउळे न होती ॥1॥
 सांडा सांडा रे मठारे । येथें गांठीसवें धुरें ॥धु.॥
 नाकेंविण मोती । उभ्या बाजारें फजिती ॥2॥
 हुकुमदाज तुका । येथें कोणी कुंपदों नका ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

No matter what status you assign them, swans do not become crows. Leave this place, you pretenders; here, the genuine come with their credentials.

A pearl without a nose-ring is a disgrace in the open market. Says Tuka, I am the enforcer of order here; let no one try to squeeze in.

IN PLAIN WORDS

However you rank them, swans do not turn into crows. Clear out, clear out, you frauds; here the real ones come with their credentials in hand. A pearl with no nose-ring is a disgrace in the open market. Tuka says: I am the one who keeps order here; let no one try to squeeze in.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram draws a hard line between the genuine devotee and the pretender. No amount of borrowed rank can turn a crow into a swan; what a person truly is shows through, and the true devotee arrives carrying real proof, not borrowed status. The pearl without its setting being shamed in the open market is his image for the fraud exposed once the crowd can see clearly. He casts himself as the keeper of order at this gate and tells the pretenders to clear out. The sharpness is aimed at the pattern of faking devotion, and it is a warning to examine whether one's own credentials are real before pushing to the front.

GATHA 2441

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the hollow boaster

मराठी मूळ

ढेंकणासी बाज गड । उतरचढ केवढी ॥1॥
 होता तैसा कळों भाव । आला वाव अंतरिंचा ॥धु.॥
 बोरामध्यें वसे अळी । अठोळीच भोंवती ॥2॥
 पोटासाठीं वेंची चणे । राजा ह्मणे तोंडें मी ॥3॥
 बेडकानें चिखल खावा । काय ठावा सागर ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसें आहे । काय पाहे त्यांत तें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A bedbug on a throne; what a contrast. Yet character reveals itself as it truly is, and the inner emptiness comes to light.

A worm lives inside a berry, circling only the pit. For the sake of his belly, one sells peanuts yet calls himself a king.

A frog that eats mud, what does it know of the ocean? Says Tuka, such is the way of things; look for what is truly inside.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A bedbug on a throne; what a climb up, what a fall down. Sooner or later the true nature shows itself, and the emptiness inside comes out into the open. A worm lives inside a berry and circles only the pit. A man sells peanuts to fill his belly, yet says with his mouth, I am a king. A frog eats mud; what does it know of the ocean? Tuka says: this is how it is. What is there to look for in such people? Look at what is truly inside.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is taking apart the boaster whose station does not match his size. The bedbug on the throne, the worm that circles only the pit of its berry, the peanut seller calling himself king, the mud-eating frog with no idea the ocean exists: each is small, and each pretends to be large. His point is that station and noise cannot hide the inner truth; given time, the real nature surfaces and the emptiness shows. The turn is inward at the end: do not be fooled by the front, and ask what is actually inside, in others and in yourself.

GATHA 2442

Prayers

Prayer, come running not walking

मराठी मूळ

धांव धांव गरुडध्वजा । आह्मां अनाथांच्या काजा ॥ 1 ॥
 बहु जालों कासावीस । ह्मणोनि पाहें तुझी वास ॥ ध्रु. ॥
 पाहें पाहें त्या मारगें । कोणी येतें माझ्या लागें ॥ 2 ॥
 असोनियां ऐसा । तुज सारिखा कोवसा ॥ 3 ॥
 न लवावा उशीर । नेणों कां हा केला धीर ॥ 4 ॥
 तुका ह्मणे चाली । नको चालूं धांव घालीं ॥ 5 ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Run, run, O Bearer of the Garuda banner. Come to the aid of us helpless ones.

I am greatly distressed and look only for You. I gaze down the road to see if someone comes for my sake.

Though You are so close, why this aloofness? Do not delay any further. I do not know why You have held back.

Says Tuka, do not walk; run to me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Run, run, you who bear the Garuda banner. Come for the sake of us who have no one. I have grown sick with distress, so I keep looking down the road for you. I watch and watch that path, to see if anyone is coming for me. You are right here, a refuge like you, so close. Do not be late any longer. I do not know why you have held yourself back. Tuka says: do not walk. Do not walk; come running.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praying in the voice of someone at the end of his strength, calling on Vishnu, the bearer of the Garuda banner, to come. He names himself among the helpless who have no other protector, and he is sick with waiting, eyes fixed on the road for any sign of rescue. The ache in the prayer is that the Lord is so near and yet seems to hold back, and he cannot understand the delay. The final line refuses any leisurely arrival: walking is not enough, the need is now, so come running.

GATHA 2443

Longing and Separation

Longing, the Mother's milk of love

मराठी मूळ

पांडुरंगे पांडुरंगे । माझे गंगे माउलिये ॥१॥
 पान्हां घाली प्रेमधारा । पूर क्षीरा लोटों दे ॥२॥
 अंगें अंग मेळउनी । करीं धणी फेडाया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे घेइन उडरा । सांडिन कुडरा भावना ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Panduranga, O Panduranga, my Ganga, my Mother. Pour forth the stream of love; let the flood of milk flow freely.

Press Your body against mine and satisfy this longing fully. Says Tuka, I shall take the leap and abandon all false pretenses.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Panduranga, Panduranga, my Ganga, my Mother. Let down your milk, the stream of love; let the flood of it pour over me freely. Press your body against mine and satisfy this longing fully. Tuka says: I will take the leap. I will throw away all my false pretenses.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays to Panduranga not as a distant lord but as mother and sacred river at once, the source he drinks from. He asks for the milk of love to be let down as a nursing mother lets it down, a flood he wants poured over him without measure, and for the closeness of body against body that finally satisfies the longing. The last line names the cost on his side: he will leap, and in leaping he will let go of every false front he has been holding up. The prayer is for union so complete that pretense simply falls away.

GATHA 2444

Sacred Stories

Mythology, the rescuer bound by His own pledge

मराठी मूळ

गजइंद्र पशु आप्तें मोकलिला । तो तुज स्मरला पांडुरंगा ॥१॥
 त्यासाठीं गरुड सांडुनि धांवसी । माया झळंबेसी दिनानाथा ॥२॥
 धेनु वत्सावरी झेंप घाली जैसी । तैसें गर्जेद्रासी सोडविलें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने ब्रीद बांधलें यासाठीं । भक्तांसी संकटीं रक्षावया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The elephant Gajendra, abandoned by his own kin, cried out to You, O Panduranga. For his sake, You left Garuda behind and came running, O Lord of the lowly.

Just as a cow rushes toward her calf, so did You rescue Gajendra. Says Tuka, this is the pledge You have bound upon Yourself: to protect Your devotees in their hour of peril.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The elephant Gajendra was a beast, left by his own people. He remembered you, Panduranga. For his sake you left Garuda behind and came running, you who love the lowly; your power surged out like a flood. As a cow leaps toward her calf, so you set Gajendra free. Tuka says: you bound this vow upon yourself for this very reason, to guard your devotees in their hour of danger.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells the story of Gajendra, the elephant seized in the water and abandoned by his herd, who cried out the Name and was saved. He stresses how the Lord came: leaving even Garuda behind, rushing as a cow rushes to her calf, the lover of the lowly moving with the urgency of a parent. The poem then names why this happens at all. The Lord has bound a pledge upon himself, a vow to protect his devotees in danger, and he keeps it. The comfort is that the same vow still stands for anyone who calls.

GATHA 2445

The Power of the Name

The Name, the essence to hold

मराठी मूळ

चारी वेद जयासाठीं । त्याचें नाम धरा कंठीं ॥१॥
 अठरा पुराणांचे पोटीं । नामाविण नाहीं गोठी ॥२॥
 गीता जेणें उपदेशिली । ते ही विटेवरी माउली ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने सार धरीं । वाचे हरिनाम उच्चारिं ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The four Vedas exist for His sake. Hold His Name on your lips.

At the core of all eighteen Puranas, there is no talk apart from the Name. She who taught the Gita is the same Mother who stands on the brick.

Says Tuka, hold fast to this essence and utter Hari's Name with your voice.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He for whose sake the four Vedas exist: hold his Name in your throat. In the belly of all eighteen Puranas there is no talk apart from the Name. The one who taught the Gita is the same Mother who stands on the brick. Tuka says: hold fast to the essence. With your tongue, say Hari's Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram gathers the whole weight of scripture and points it at one practice. The four Vedas exist for the Lord; the eighteen Puranas, at their core, speak of nothing but his Name; and the very one who spoke the Gita is the same Vitthal who stands waiting on the brick at Pandhari. He flattens the distance between the highest teaching and the simplest act. You do not need to master the texts; you need to do what the texts are for. So hold the essence and let the tongue speak Hari's Name.

GATHA 2446

True Worship

True worship, seek Him among people

मराठी मूळ

पाहातां ठायाठाव । जातो अंतरोनि देव ॥१॥
नये वाटों गुणदोषीं । मना जतन येविशीं ॥२॥
त्रिविधदेह परिचारा । जनीं जनादनन खरा ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे धीरें- । विण कैसें होतें बरें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When you look for God in place after place, He recedes into the distance. One should not get lost in judging qualities and faults; the mind must be carefully guarded in this regard.

In serving the body's threefold needs, one finds that Janardana truly dwells among the people. Says Tuka, without patience, how can anything turn out well?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When you look for God in place after place, he keeps slipping away into the distance. Do not get lost in weighing other people's merits and faults; guard your mind carefully in this. Serving the body's threefold needs, you find that Janardana truly lives among people. Tuka says: without patience, how does anything turn out well?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram corrects the search that keeps God always elsewhere. The more you hunt for him in one holy place after another, the further off he recedes, and the habit of judging the good and bad in others only scatters the mind. The turn is that God, Janardana, is found in serving real people in their ordinary needs, not in spiritual sightseeing.

He closes on the quiet discipline that makes this possible: without patience, nothing comes right. Worship is steadiness and service close at hand, not restless seeking far away.

GATHA 2447

The Power of the Name

The Name, the easiest path

मराठी मूळ

नामसंकीर्तन साधन पै सोपें । जळतील पापें जन्मांतरे ॥१॥
 न लगे सायास जावें वनांतरा । सुखें येतो घरा नारायण ॥२॥
 ठायींच बैसोनि करा एकचित्त । आवडी अनंत आळवावा ॥३॥
 रामकृष्णहरिविठ्ठलकेशवा । मंत्र हा जपावा सर्वकाळ ॥४॥
 याहूनि आणीक नाही पै साधन । वाहातसें आण विठोबाची ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Singing the Name is the easiest of all spiritual practices. The sins of many lifetimes will burn away.

There is no need for painful effort or retreat into the forest. Narayana comes happily to your very home.

Sit right where you are, focus your mind, and call upon the Infinite One with love. Chant always: Rama, Krishna, Hari, Vitthal, Keshava.

There is no other practice beyond this; I swear it by Vitthal. Says Tuka, this is the simplest of all paths. The wise one seizes the opportunity here and now.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Singing the Name is the easy practice. The sins of past births will burn away. You need no hard effort, no going off into the forest. Narayana comes happily to your house. Sit right where you are, gather your mind into one point, and call on the Infinite One with love. Chant always: Rama, Krishna, Hari, Vitthal, Keshava. There is no other practice beyond this; I swear it by Vithoba. Tuka says: this is the simplest of all. The wise one takes his fill here.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out singing the Name as the open door that asks for nothing you cannot give. No forest retreat, no painful austerity: you stay where you are, steady the mind, and call on God with love, and the sins of many lifetimes burn off. He even names the chant, Rama, Krishna, Hari, Vitthal, Keshava, so there is no mystery about what to do. The oath he swears by Vithoba is the radical claim: there is no practice higher than this. So the wise person does not wait or wander; he seizes the chance and takes his fill of it now.

GATHA 2448

The Nature of God

Nature of God, He loves the artless

मराठी मूळ

भाविकांचें काज अंगें देव करी । काढी धर्माघरीं उच्छष्ट तें ॥१॥
 उच्छष्ट तीं फळें खाय भिल्लटीचीं । आवडी तयांची मोठी देवा ॥२॥
 काय देवा घरीं न मिळेची अन्न । मागे भाजीपान द्रौपदीसी ॥३॥
 अर्जुनाचीं घोडीं धुतलीं अनंतें । संकटें बहुतें निवारिलीं ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसीं आवडती लडिवाळें । जाणीवेचें काळें तोंड देवा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God personally attends to the affairs of the faithful. He ate the leftovers at Dharma's house.

He ate the half-tasted fruit offered by the tribal woman Shabari; such is God's great love for His devotees. As if God's own household lacked food, He begged Draupadi for greens and scraps.

Ananta washed Arjuna's horses and rescued him from countless dangers. Says Tuka, God loves such innocent, childlike devotees. The face of calculated knowing is blackened before Him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God himself does the work of the faithful. He carried out the leftover scraps in Dharma's house. He ate the half-tasted berries of the tribal woman; his love for such people is great. As if there were no food in God's own house, he begged greens and scraps from Draupadi. Ananta washed Arjuna's horses and turned away many dangers. Tuka says: he loves these simple, childlike ones. The face of clever calculation is blackened before him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up the stories where God does the lowly, undignified work for those who love him simply: clearing scraps in Yudhishtira's house, eating Shabari's already-tasted berries, asking Draupadi for a few greens, washing Arjuna's horses, warding off danger after danger. The thread is that the Lord stoops gladly for the artless and trusting, and that their plain love draws him close. The sting is in the last line. The face of calculated cleverness, the one who comes with knowledge to bargain rather than love, is blackened, shamed, before him. He warns against the calculating posture, not against any person, and points to childlike trust instead.

GATHA 2449

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the thief of the mind

मराठी मूळ

सांवळें रूपडें चोरटें चित्ताचें । उभें पंढरीचे विटेवरी॥१॥
 डोळ्यांची धणी पाहातां न पुरे । तया लागीं झुरे मन माझें ॥२॥
 आन गोड कांहीं न लगे संसारीं । राहिले अंतरीं पाय तुझे॥३॥
 प्राण रिघों पाहे कुडी हे सांडुनी । श्रीमुख नयनीं न देखतां ॥४॥
 चित्त मोहियेलें नंदाच्या नंदनं । तुका ह्मणे येणें गरुडध्वजें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

That dark, beautiful form, the thief of chittas, stands upon the brick at Pandhari. My eyes can never have their fill of gazing upon Him.

My mind pines for Him ceaselessly. Nothing else in this world tastes sweet to me; Your feet alone have settled within my chitta.

My very life-breath seeks to leave this body because it cannot bear not seeing Your holy face. Says Tuka, my chitta has been stolen by the Son of Nanda, by this Bearer of the Garuda banner.

IN PLAIN WORDS

That dark, lovely form, the thief of the mind, stands on the brick at Pandhari. My eyes gaze and gaze and are never full; for that my mind wastes away. Nothing else in this world tastes sweet to me; your feet have settled inside me. My breath wants to leave this body when my eyes cannot see your holy face. Tuka says: my mind has been stolen by the Son of Nanda, by this bearer of the Garuda banner.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes being captured by the dark beauty of Vitthal standing on the brick at Pandhari, calling him the thief who has stolen the mind. The longing is bodily: eyes that look and are never satisfied, a mind that pines, a world that has lost all other sweetness because the Lord's feet have lodged inside him. He goes to the edge, saying his very breath wants to leave the body when it cannot see that face. The closing names the thief plainly as Krishna, the Son of Nanda, the same Vitthal, so the loss of the self to him is owned as joy, not complaint.

GATHA 2450

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, choose the Name over debate

मराठी मूळ

ऐका ऐका भाविकजन । कोण कोण व्हाल ते ॥१॥
 ताकिकांचा टाका संग । पांडुरंग स्मरा हो ॥२॥
 नका शोधूं मतांतरे । नुमगे खरें बुडाल ॥३॥
 कलिमध्ये दास तुका । जातो लोकां सांगत ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Listen, listen, O faithful ones. Who among you will come? Abandon the company of cynics and logicians.

Remember Panduranga. Do not go searching through various doctrines; you will drown without finding the truth.

Says Tuka, in this age of Kali, this servant goes about telling the people.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Listen, listen, you faithful ones. Which of you will come along? Drop the company of arguers and logic-choppers. Remember Panduranga. Do not go hunting through this doctrine and that; you will drown without ever reaching the truth. Tuka says: in the age of Kali, this servant goes about telling people just this.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram calls out to the faithful and asks who will walk this road with him. His instruction is blunt: leave the company of the clever debaters and remember Panduranga instead. He warns that wandering from one doctrine to another does not arrive anywhere; you sink before you ever touch the truth. He names his own task in the age of Kali: he is a servant going from person to person saying exactly this. The poem sets simple remembrance of the Name against endless intellectual searching, and chooses the Name.

GATHA 2451

Worldly Life

Worldly life, the false claim of freedom

मराठी मूळ

आपुलिया आंगें तोडी मायाजाळ । ऐसें नाहीं बळ कोणापार्शीं ॥१॥
 हर्षामर्ष जों हे नाहीं जों जिराले । तोंवरि हे केले चार त्यांनीं ॥२॥
 मुक्त जालों ऐसें बोलों जाये मुखें । तुका ह्मणे दुःखें बांधला तो ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

No one has the strength to break Maya's web by one's own effort. As long as joy and sorrow have not been digested, those impulses rule the person.

Says Tuka, the one who claims 'I am liberated' with his mouth while still bound by suffering is still in chains.

IN PLAIN WORDS

No one has the strength to tear Maya's net by his own power. As long as delight and resentment are not yet burned out in him, those forces keep moving him about. A man may say with his mouth, I have become free. Tuka says: while bound by his sorrows, he is still in chains.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram punctures the easy claim of liberation. The web of Maya cannot be cut by your own muscle, and as long as the pulls of pleasure and offense are still alive and undigested, they go on steering the person whatever he says. So the man who declares with his mouth, I am liberated, has only made a noise. The test is not the words but the condition: if he is still held fast by his own griefs, he is still bound. The poem turns the listener back to honest self-examination rather than to a flattering verdict.

GATHA 2452

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, the hollow show of generosity

मराठी मूळ

आलिया अतीता ह्यणतसां पुढारें । आपुलें रोकडें सत्त्व जाय ॥१॥
 काय त्याचा भार घेऊनि मस्तकीं । हीनकर्मीं लोकीं ह्याणावया ॥२॥
 दारीं हाका कैसें करवतें भोजन । रुची तरि अन्न कैसें देतें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याणे ध्वज उभारिला कर । ते शक्ति उदार काय जाली ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When a guest arrives, you say 'come back later,' and your own goodness drains away on the spot. Why carry his burden on your head just to be called generous in public? How can one enjoy a meal while turning away the hungry at the door? Does food taste good under such conditions? Says Tuka, one raises a flag and holds up a hand, but has that generosity actually amounted to anything?

IN PLAIN WORDS

A guest comes, and you say, come back later; and right then your own goodness drains away. Why carry his burden on your head only to be called generous in front of people, while your deeds stay low? When you turn away the hungry calling at your door, how can the meal be eaten? How can the food have any taste? Tuka says: you raise a flag and lift up your hand; but has that generosity ever amounted to anything?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram exposes generosity that is only for show. The moment you tell an arriving guest to come back later, your real goodness has already drained out, whatever reputation you keep. He asks why anyone would shoulder the appearance of charity in public while the actual deeds stay mean, and he makes it visceral: with the hungry calling at the door, how can your own meal taste good? The closing image of a raised flag and a lifted hand is the public gesture of giving, and the question cuts it down. If the act behind the gesture is empty, the generosity is worth nothing. The poem points at the pattern of performed virtue, and asks for the real thing.

GATHA 2453

The Saints

Adoration, the saints' company

मराठी मूळ

जेथें लक्ष्मीचा वास । गंगा आली पापा नास ॥१॥
 तें म्यां हृदयीं धरिलें । तापें हरण पाउलें ॥ध्रु॥
 सेवा केली संतजनीं। सुखें राहिले लपोनि ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे वांकी । भाट जाली तिहीं लोकीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Where Lakshmi dwells, there the Ganga comes to destroy sins. I have held that in my heart, and my afflictions have been relieved.

The saints have served, and joys have remained hidden within them. Says Tuka, the path has been cleared across all three worlds.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Where Lakshmi dwells, the Ganga comes and washes sins away. I have held that in my heart, and his feet take my burning away. The saints have served, and they rest hidden in their joy. Tuka says: the road has been opened across all three worlds.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praising the feet of God as the place where every grace gathers. He names two great gifts, Lakshmi's wealth and the Ganga's washing of sin, and says both meet at those feet, which is what he keeps in his heart; once he holds them, the fever of his suffering is lifted. The saints have done their part by serving God, and they live quietly inside the joy that service brought them. The last line widens the claim: the path they cleared is open now in all three worlds, so the way home is no longer hidden from anyone.

GATHA 2454

Devotion to Vitthal

Absorption, lost in the form

मराठी मूळ

रुपीं जडले लोचन । पायीं िस्थरावलें मन ॥१॥
 देहभाव हरपला । तुज पाहातां विठ्ठला ॥ध्रु॥
 कळों नये सुखदुःख। तान हरपली भूक ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे नव्हे परती । तुझ्या दर्शनिं मागुती ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My eyes are fixed upon Your form, and my mind has become steady at Your feet. All sense of body has been lost in beholding You, Vitthal.

Neither pleasure nor pain is felt, and hunger and thirst have vanished. Says Tuka, I shall not turn back from Your sight ever again.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My eyes are stuck to your form. My mind has come to rest at your feet. The sense of having a body is gone, while I look at you, Vitthal. I cannot tell pleasure from pain. Thirst and hunger have vanished. Tuka says: I will not turn back. Once I have seen you, I will not look away again.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing what happens when sight of God takes hold completely. His eyes fasten on Vitthal's form and his restless mind finally settles at the feet; in that looking, the constant pull of the body drops away. With it go the ordinary measures of life, the swing between pleasure and pain, the press of hunger and thirst, all dissolved in the seeing. The closing vow is the point: having once been given this darshan, he refuses ever to turn back from it.

GATHA 2455

Prayers

Prayer, do not push me away

मराठी मूळ

जाणतें लेकरं । माता लागे दूर धरं ॥१॥
तैसें न करीं कृपावंते । पांडुरंगे माझे माते ॥२॥
नाहीं मुक्ताफळा । भेटी मागुती त्या जळा ॥३॥
तुका ह्याने लोणी । ताक सांडी निवडूनि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A mother keeps a knowing child at a distance. Do not do so with me, O gracious Panduranga, O my mother.

The pearl once detached from its shell does not return to those waters. Says Tuka, butter, once separated, cannot rejoin the buttermilk.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A mother lets a grown child go far from her. Do not do that to me, merciful one, Panduranga, my mother. The pearl, once taken from the shell, does not return to that water. Tuka says: butter, once churned out, leaves the buttermilk for good. It will not go back in.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays to God as a mother and asks not to be set at a distance. A mother trusts a knowing, grown child to fend for itself and keeps it a little apart; he begs God not to treat him that way, but to hold him close. The two images carry the fear underneath the prayer: a pearl drawn from its shell does not slip back into the sea, and butter once churned out cannot be poured back into the buttermilk. Some separations are final, so he pleads to be kept near now, before the parting becomes one that nothing can mend.

GATHA 2456

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, no refuge but you

मराठी मूळ

तुजविण कोणां । शरण जाऊं नारायणा ॥१॥
 ऐसा न देखें मी कोणी । तुजा तिहीं त्रिभुवनीं ॥२॥
 पाहिलीं पुराणें । धांडोळलीं दुरुषणें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ठायीं । जडून ठेलों तुझ्या पायीं ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

To whom shall I surrender but You, O Narayana? I see no one like You in all the three worlds. I have searched through the Puranas and examined all the scriptures.

Says Tuka, I remain rooted at Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To whom shall I go for refuge, Narayana, if not to you? I see no one like you anywhere in the three worlds. I have looked through the Puranas. I have searched the scriptures everywhere. Tuka says: I am fixed here. I have settled fast at your feet, and there I stay.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram declares that his search has ended at one place only. He asks where else he could surrender, and answers that nowhere in the three worlds is there another like Narayana. This is not said blindly; he has gone through the Puranas and searched the scriptures, and the searching only confirmed it. So he stops looking outward and roots himself, fastened at God's feet, with no thought of going elsewhere.

GATHA 2457

Longing and Separation

Longing, to see all as Brahman

मराठी मूळ

ऐसें भाग्य कई लाहाता होईन । अवघें देखें जन ब्रह्मरूप ॥१॥
 मग तया सुखा अंत नाही पार । आनंदें सागर हेलावती ॥२॥
 शांति क्षमा दया मूतिनमंत अंगीं । परावृत्त संगीं कामादिकां ॥३॥
 विवेकासहित वैराग्याचें बळ । धग्धगितोज्ज्वाळ अग्नि जैसा ॥४॥
 भक्ति नवविधा भावशुद्ध बरी । अळंकारावरी मुगुटमणि ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझी पुरवी वासना । कोण नारायणा तुजविण ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When will such fortune be attained, that I may see all beings as Brahman? Then there would be no end to that bliss, and oceans of joy would overflow. Peace, forgiveness, and compassion would dwell in every limb, and all desires would turn away.

Discrimination joined with the strength of dispassion would blaze like a brilliant fire. Ninefold devotion, pure in sentiment, would be the crown jewel upon all virtues.

Says Tuka, who but You, O Narayana, can fulfill my deepest longing?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When will I be lucky enough to see every person as Brahman, as God's own form? Then that joy would have no end, no shore; oceans of bliss would rise and overflow. Peace, forgiveness, and mercy would live in my whole body, and every craving would turn away. Discrimination joined to the strength of dispassion would blaze like a bright, roaring fire. The ninefold devotion, pure in feeling, would be the crown jewel on all that. Tuka says: who but you, Narayana, can fill this longing of mine?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praying for a single fortune, to see every living being as God's own form. He spells out what that vision would bring: a bliss with no end or far shore, oceans of joy spilling over. In such a state, peace, forgiveness, and mercy would fill his whole being and desire would fall away, while clear discernment and dispassion would burn in him like a fierce, bright fire. He crowns the list with the ninefold path of devotion, pure in feeling, as the jewel above every other virtue, then turns it all back into a plea: only Narayana can grant a longing this deep.

GATHA 2458

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the free wealth of kirtan

मराठी मूळ

कासया करावे तपाचे डोंगर । आणीक अपार दुःखरासी ॥१॥
 कासया फिरावे अनेक ते देश । दावितील आस पुढें लाभ ॥२॥
 कासया पुजावीं अनेक दैवतें । पोटभरे तेथें लाभ नाही ॥३॥
 कासया करावे मुक्तीचे सायास । मिळे पंढरीस फुका साटीं ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे करीं कीर्तन पसारा । लाभ येईल घरा पाहिजे तो ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why heap up mountains of penance and endless suffering? Why wander through countless lands, lured by promises of future gain? Why worship many deities when no real profit comes from them? Why struggle for liberation when it can be had freely at Pandhari? Says Tuka, spread the practice of kirtan, and every treasure you desire will come to your door.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why pile up mountains of penance and heaps of pain on top? Why wander through one country after another, lured on by the promise of gain ahead? Why worship many gods, when filling the belly is all you get there and no real profit comes? Why struggle and strain after liberation, when at Pandhari it is given free? Tuka says: spread out the singing of kirtan. The gain you are after will come home to you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips away the costly roads people take toward God and points to the free one. One by one he questions them: harsh austerities that only add suffering, restless pilgrimage chasing a promised reward, the worship of many deities that feeds the stomach but yields nothing lasting, and the strenuous quest for liberation. Each, he says, is needless effort when what they seek is handed over for nothing at Pandhari. His counsel is simple and direct: take up kirtan, the open singing of God's name, and every treasure those hard paths chased will arrive at your own door.

GATHA 2459

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, honor the holy, not yourself

मराठी मूळ

वैष्णवमुनिविप्रांचा सन्मान । करावा आपण घेऊं नये ॥१॥
 प्रभु जाला तरी संसाराचा दास । विहित तयासी यांची सेवा ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे हे आशीर्वादे बळी । जाईल तो छळी नरकायासीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One should honor the Vaishnavas, sages, and brahmins, but should not seek such honor for oneself. Even if one becomes a ruler, one is still a servant of worldly life, and it is ordained to serve these holy ones.

Says Tuka, those who torment these blessed ones, strong in their benedictions, shall go to hell.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Honor the Vaishnavas, the sages, and the brahmins. Do not take such honor for yourself. Even one who has become a ruler is still a servant of worldly life; serving these holy ones is his proper duty. Tuka says: these blessed ones are strong in their blessing. Whoever torments them will go to the torments of hell.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets out a rule about where honor belongs. The devotees, the sages, and the brahmins are to be honored, but a person must not turn that honor toward himself. Even a king, who looks like a master, is still bound as a servant within worldly life, and his fitting work is to serve these holy ones rather than to be served. The warning at the end points at a pattern, not a person: the blessing of such people is a real power, and to harm them is to call down on yourself the very suffering you deal out.

GATHA 2460

The Saints

The saints, ask only for their company

मराठी मूळ

देव वसे चित्तीं । त्याची घडावी संगती ॥१॥
 ऐसें आवडतें मना । देवा पुरवावी वासना ॥२॥
 हरिजनासी भेटी । नहो अंगसंगें तुटी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने जिणें । भलें संतसंघष्टणें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Seek the company of one in whose chitta God dwells. This is what the mind loves; O God, fulfill this desire.**Let there be meeting with Hari's devotees, and may that bond never be broken. Says Tuka, a life spent in the company of saints is a life well lived.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Seek the company of one in whose heart God lives. This is what my mind loves; God, grant me this one craving. Let me meet the devotees of Hari, and let that closeness never be cut off. Tuka says: a life is good when it is worn smooth by rubbing against the saints.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks God for one thing only, the company of people in whose hearts God dwells. He names it as the desire his mind truly loves and begs that this craving, and not the others, be fulfilled. He wants to meet Hari's devotees and stay in unbroken closeness with them. The last line gives the reason: a life is well spent when it is pressed and rubbed against the saints, the way a rough stone is smoothed by constant friction.

GATHA 2461

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the leftover grace

मराठी मूळ

भाग सीण गेला । माझा सकळ विठ्ठला ॥१॥
 तुझा ह्याणवितों दास । केली उच्छिष्टाची आस ॥२॥
 राहिली तळमळ । तई पासोनी सकळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने धालें । पोट ऐसें कळों आलें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*All my weariness and exhaustion have departed, O Vitthal. I call myself Your servant and have set my hope on Your leftover grace.**All my restlessness has ceased from that time onward. Says Tuka, I have come to feel that my hunger is truly satisfied.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

All my tiredness and strain are gone, Vitthal, every bit of it. I call myself your servant. I have set my hope on the food left over from your plate. Since then all my restlessness has stopped. Tuka says: I have come to know it. My belly is full.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming the rest that comes from being claimed by God. His weariness has fully lifted, and he calls himself Vitthal's servant whose whole hope rests on God's leftover grace, the prasad from the master's own plate. From the moment he took that lowly place, the inner restlessness that drove him stopped. The closing image is bodily and plain: he now knows, the way a fed man knows, that his belly is full and his hunger truly satisfied.

GATHA 2462

Prayers

Prayer, the name against death

मराठी मूळ

रायाचें सेवक । सेवटीचें पीडी रंक ॥१॥
 हा तों हिणाव कवणा । कां हो नेणां नारायणा ॥२॥
 परिसेंसी भेटी । नव्हे लोहोपणा तुटी ॥२॥
 तुझें नाम कंठी । तुक्या काळासवें भेटी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A king's servant ends up oppressing the poor. Whose shame is this? Do You not know, O Narayana? When iron meets the philosopher's stone, its nature as iron does not simply vanish.

Says Tuka, with Your name on my lips, let me meet even Death without fear.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A king's servant ends up grinding down the poor. Whose disgrace is this? Do you not know, Narayana? When iron touches the philosopher's stone, its old iron nature is not simply lost. Tuka says: with your name in my throat, let me meet death itself and not be afraid.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram opens with a hard observation and turns it into a plea. A king's own servant comes to oppress the helpless poor, and he asks God whose shame that really is, as if to say the master is answerable for the servant. He then sets against this the image of iron meeting the touchstone that turns it to gold, noting the change is real and not a mere hiding of the old metal. His own prayer follows the same hope: with God's name held in his throat, he wants to face even death without fear, transformed past the dread that death holds over ordinary people.

GATHA 2463

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the easy path at Pandhari

मराठी मूळ

सुखरूप ऐसैं कोण दुजें सांगा । माझ्या पांडुरंगा सारिकें तें ॥१॥
 न लगे हिंडणें मुंडणें ते कांहीं । साधनाची नाहीं आटाआटी ॥२॥
 चंद्रभागे स्नान विध तो हरिकथा । समाधान चित्ता सर्वकाळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने काला वैकुंठीं दुर्लभ । विशेष तो लाभ संतसंग ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Tell me, who else is the embodiment of bliss like my Panduranga? There is no need for wandering or shaving one's head, no painful austerities to perform. Bathe in the Chandrabhaga, let the sacred hari-katha be your ritual, and the mind will find contentment at all times.

Says Tuka, even in Vaikuntha this would be rare; the greatest gain is the company of saints.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tell me, who else is bliss itself, the way my Panduranga is? There is no need to wander, no need to shave the head, no harsh straining at practices. Bathe in the Chandrabhaga; let hari-katha be your rite; and the mind is at peace at all times. Tuka says: this is rare even in Vaikuntha. The greatest gain of all is the company of saints.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram praises Panduranga as bliss embodied and contrasts him with the hard religion people take on. There is no call to wander far, to shave the head as a renunciate, or to grind through painful disciplines. A bath in the river Chandrabhaga at Pandhari and the hearing and telling of God's story, hari-katha, are rite enough, and they keep the mind settled all the time. He ends by raising the stakes: this ease is something rare even in Vaikuntha, God's own heaven, and the highest gain within it is the company of the saints.

GATHA 2464

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, teaching only the ready

मराठी मूळ

नसतां अधिकार उपदेशासी बळत्कार । तरि ते केले हो चार माकडा आणि गारुडी ॥१॥
 धन धान्य राज्य बोल वृथा रंजवणें फोल । नाहीं तेथें ओल बीज वेची मूर्ख तो ॥२॥
 नये बांधों गांठी पदरा आण ऐसी तुटी । असोन कसोटी शिष्टाचार अनुभव ॥३॥
 उपदेसी तुका मेघ वृष्टीनें आडका । संकल्पासी धोका सहज तें उत्तम ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Forcing instruction upon one who has no readiness is like performing tricks with a monkey and a snake charmer. Wealth, grain, kingdom, and pleasing words are hollow entertainments.

Where there is no receptive soil, the fool wastes his seed. Says Tuka, who teaches like the rain cloud, listen: what comes naturally and without contrivance, that alone is excellent.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To force teaching on one who is not ready for it is like the tricks of a monkey and a snake charmer. Wealth, grain, kingdom, fine talk; pleasing people with these is empty, just husk. Where the soil is not moist, the fool throws his seed away. Do not tie such a thing in the corner of your cloth; that knot only tears it; let your touchstone be the conduct and the experience of the wise. Tuka says: teach the way the cloud teaches, by raining. Forcing the outcome is the danger; what comes of itself is best.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is warning against pushing spiritual teaching onto people who are not ready to receive it. Forced instruction, he says, is mere showmanship, like the trained antics of a monkey and a snake charmer, and pleasing crowds with wealth, grain, power, or clever words is hollow husk. The farming image carries the heart of it: scattering seed on dry, unreceptive ground is the act of a fool. So do not hoard or force such teaching; let your test be the lived conduct and experience of the wise. His closing picture is the cloud, which does not aim its rain at one field but lets it fall; in the same way, teaching that comes naturally, without contrivance, is the best, while straining to control the result is where the harm lies.

GATHA 2465

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the hollow show

मराठी मूळ

घालुनियां मापीं । देवभक्त बैसले जपीं ॥१॥
 तैसी होते सांडउलंडी । निजनिजांची मुडी ॥२॥
 अमुपीं उखतें । आपण वोस आपण यातें ॥३॥
 देव आतां जाला । उगवे संकोच वहिला ॥४॥
 अखंड नेलें वेठी । भार सत्याविण गांठी ॥५॥
 आडकिला झोंपा । रिता किळवरचा खोंपा ॥६॥
 तुका ह्मणे बळें । उपदेशाचें तोंड काळें ॥७॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

False devotees have sat measuring devotion by outward show, yet their inner lives topple over. They claim authority they do not possess, and are themselves hollow.

God has now come; let this pretense be dissolved at once. They have been pressed into forced service, carrying burdens without truth.

Caught in slumber, their hut of sincerity stands empty. Along the Godavari's bank they create mischief.

Says Tuka, by force they blacken the face of true teaching.

IN PLAIN WORDS

False devotees sit measuring devotion by outward show. Inside, their lives topple over. Each one falls in his own way. They claim authority they do not have. They are hollow within. Now God has come; let this pretense be dissolved at once. They have been pressed into forced labor, carrying loads with no truth in them. They are caught asleep. The hut of sincerity stands empty. Along the bank of the Godavari they make mischief. Tuka says: by force they blacken the face of true teaching.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing the religion that lives on the surface. People weigh devotion by what can be seen and counted, but the inner life has nothing under it and collapses. They take on a teacher's authority they were never given, and the pose is empty. The poem names the cost of this: such people carry their religious duty as forced labor, a load without truth, and they spread confusion even at the holy bank where others come to pray. The harshness is aimed at the pattern of empty display, the temptation to perform piety, not at any one soul; the warning is to look whether your own devotion has anything inside it.

GATHA 2466

The Nature of God

Wonder, the infinite in the infant

मराठी मूळ

उंबरांतील कीटका । हें चि ब्रह्मांड ऐसें लेखा ॥1॥
 ऐसीं उंबरें किती झाडीं । ऐशीं झाडें किती नवखडीं ॥२॥
 हें चि ब्रह्मांड आह्मांसी । ऐसीं अगणित अंडें कैसीं ॥3॥
 विराटाचे अंगी तैसे । मोजूं जातां अगणित केंश ॥4॥
 ऐशा विराटाच्या कोटी । सांटवल्या ज्याच्या पोटी ॥5॥
 तो हा नंदाचा बाळमुकुंद । तान्हा ह्मणवी परमानंद ॥6॥
 ऐशी अगम्य ईश्वरी लीळा । ब्रह्मानंदीं गम्य तुक्याला ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The insect inside a fig thinks the fig is the whole universe. But how many such figs hang on trees, and how many such trees stand in the nine continents? We think this is our universe, yet countless such cosmic eggs exist beyond counting.

Upon the body of the Cosmic Being, these are as innumerable as hairs. Crores of such cosmic forms are contained in His belly.

And yet He is Nanda's child, the little Mukunda, who calls Himself the infant of supreme bliss. Such is the unfathomable divine play, and Says Tuka, by the grace of Brahmananda, it becomes knowable.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The insect inside a fig thinks the fig is the whole universe. But how many such figs hang on a tree? And how many such trees stand across the nine lands? So it is with us: we think this is the whole universe. Yet countless such cosmic eggs exist beyond counting. On the body of the Cosmic Being they are as many as the hairs. Crores of such vast forms are held inside His belly. And He is Nanda's child, the little Mukunda, the infant who is supreme bliss itself. Such is the unfathomable divine play. Tuka says: by the grace of Brahmananda, it becomes known to me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets two scales side by side to break the mind that thinks it sees the whole. The insect in the fig takes its fig for the universe; we do the same with our own cosmos, never guessing how many universes there are. He piles up the immensity, countless cosmic eggs, all of them mere hairs on the body of the Cosmic Being, crores of such forms held in a single belly. Then he drops the whole weight onto its opposite: this same all-containing Lord is Nanda's small son, Mukunda, the infant who is bliss. The point is that the unmeasurable and the cradled child are one, and that this play is not solved by counting but given, here as Tuka's own knowing through grace.

GATHA 2467

Sacred Stories

Mythology, pride must be broken

मराठी मूळ

ब्रह्मज्ञान तरी एके दिवसीं कळे । तात्काळ हा गळे अभिमान ॥1॥
 अभिमान लागे शुकाचिये पाठी । व्यासें उपराटी दृष्टी केली ॥ध्रु॥
 जनकभेटीसी पाठविला तेणें । अभिमान नाणें खोटें केलें ॥2॥
 खोटें करुनियां लाविला अभ्यासीं । मेरुशिखरासी शुक गेला ॥3॥
 जाऊनियां तेणें साधिली समाधी । तुका ह्मणे तधीं होतों आह्मी ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The knowledge of Brahman may dawn in a single day, and at once pride dissolves. Yet pride clung even to Shuka's back, so Vyasa turned his gaze upon him differently.

Vyasa sent Shuka to meet King Janaka, and thereby rendered that counterfeit pride worthless. Having exposed it, Vyasa set Shuka to practice, and Shuka ascended to the peak of Mount Meru.

Going there, Shuka attained samadhi. Says Tuka, we too were present at that time.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The knowledge of Brahman can dawn in a single day, and at once pride dissolves. Yet pride still clung to Shuka. So Vyasa turned his gaze upon him another way. Vyasa sent Shuka to meet King Janaka, and so made that counterfeit pride worthless. Having exposed it, Vyasa set Shuka to practice. Shuka climbed to the peak of Mount Meru. Going there, Shuka attained samadhi. Tuka says: we too were present then.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses the old story of Vyasa and his son Shuka to make one point about realization and pride. Even when the knowledge of Brahman dawns, a subtle pride in having it can remain, and it remained in Shuka. The father does not argue; he sends the son to King Janaka, who shows him that his attainment is counterfeit while pride is still in it. Only after that exposure is the real practice begun, ending in Shuka's samadhi on Mount Meru. The closing line, that Tuka too was present then, claims this is not distant history but his own lived ground; the lesson is that pride must be emptied before the knowing is true.

GATHA 2468

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, surrender over ritual

मराठी मूळ

सहज पावतां भगवंतीं परि हीं विकल्पें परतीं । फुकाची हे चितीं वाठवण कां न धरिती ॥1॥
 हरि व्यापक सर्वगत हें तंव मुख्यत्वे वेदांत । चिंतनासी चित्त असों द्यावें सावध ॥२॥
 विरजाहोम या चि नावें देह नव्हे मी जाणावें । मग कां जी यावें वरी लागे संकल्पा ॥३॥
 कामक्रोधे देह मिळण स्वाहाकारीं कैचें पुण्य । मंत्रीं पूजियेला यज्ञ मनमुंडण नव्हे चि ॥४॥
 अनन्यभक्तीचे उपाय ते या विठोबाचे पाय । ध्याइल तो काय जाणे चुकों मारग ॥५॥
 आतां सांगे तुका एक तुझी चुकों नका । सांडीमांडी धोका शरण रिघतां गोमटें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God is attained so naturally, yet people turn back because of doubts. Why not hold this free remembrance in your chitta? Hari pervades everything; this is the principal teaching of Vedanta.

Keep your mind alert and absorbed in contemplation. The offering into the sacred fire means knowing 'I am not this body.' Then why should fresh desires arise again? When body and senses are consumed in desire and anger, what merit can come from ritual oblations? The true remedy lies in exclusive devotion to Vithoba's feet; one who meditates on Him will never lose the way.

Says Tuka, I tell you this one thing: do not err. Abandon all hesitation and take refuge; that alone is beautiful.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God is reached so naturally, yet people turn back because of their doubts. Why not hold this free remembrance in the heart? Hari pervades everything; this is the chief teaching of Vedanta. Keep the mind awake and absorbed in His remembrance. The true offering into the fire is to know: I am not this body. Then why let fresh desires rise again? When the body and senses are burned up in desire and anger, what merit can come from your oblations? The mantra-worshipped sacrifice is not the same as shaving the mind clean. The real remedy is single devotion to Vithoba's feet. One who meditates on Him never loses the way. Tuka says: I tell you this one thing, do not go wrong. Drop all hesitation and take refuge; that alone is good.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is correcting people who make God hard to reach when He is near. He says reaching God is natural, and the only obstacle is doubt; the remembrance that Hari fills everything is free for the taking, and Vedanta says no more than this. Then he turns the language of ritual inward: the real fire-offering is the knowledge I am not this body, not a ceremony, and outward oblations are worthless while desire and anger keep burning the senses.

Shaving the head is not shaving the mind. The settled remedy he names is exclusive devotion to Vithoba's feet, and the closing charge is plain: stop hesitating and surrender, because that is the one move that does not go wrong.

GATHA 2469

The Nature of God

Longing, show me the small form

मराठी मूळ

आह्मीं जाणावें तें काई तुझें वर्म कोणे ठायीं । अंतपार नाहीं ऐसें श्रुति बोलती ॥१॥
 होई मज तैसा मज तैसा साना सकुमार रुषीकेशा । पुरवीं माझी आशा भुजा चारी दाखवीं॥२॥
 खालता सप्त ही पाताळा वरता स्वर्गाहूनि दिसाळा । तो मी मस्यक डोळां कैसा पाहों आपला ॥३॥
 मज असे हा भरवसा पढीये वोसी तयां तैसा । पंढरीनिवासा तुका ह्मणे गा विठोबा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How can I know Your secret, and where does it reside? The scriptures themselves declare You are without end or limit. Then become for me small and tender, O Hrishiksha; show me Your four-armed form and fulfill my longing.

You extend below the seven nether worlds and tower beyond the heavens. How then can I behold You with these small eyes? I have this faith that You become whatever Your devotee needs.

Says Tuka, O Vithoba, dweller of Pandhari, I trust in this.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How am I to know Your secret, and where does it lie? The scriptures themselves say You are without end or limit. So become small and tender for me, O Hrishiksha. Show me Your four-armed form and fulfill my longing. You reach below the seven nether worlds and rise above the heavens. How then can I see You with these small eyes? I hold this faith: You become whatever Your devotee needs. Tuka says: O Vithoba, dweller of Pandhari, I trust in this.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram admits a real difficulty and answers it with faith. The scriptures call God endless and limitless, so there is no secret he could grasp and no place he could locate Him. A being that stretches below all the nether worlds and above all the heavens cannot be taken in by small human eyes. So instead of straining toward the infinite, he asks God to come down to his scale, to be small and tender, to show the four-armed form a devotee can actually behold. The ground under the request is the conviction that God shapes Himself to whatever the devotee needs, and on that trust he rests at Vithoba's Pandhari.

GATHA 2470

Renunciation

Renunciation, the joy of solitude

मराठी मूळ

वृक्ष वल्ली आह्मां सोयरीं वनचरें । पक्षी ही सुस्वरें आळविती ॥1॥
 येणें सुखें रुचे एकांताचा वास । नाहीं गुण दोष अंगा येत ॥ध्रु॥
 आकाश मंडप पृथुवी आसन । रमे तेथें मन क्रीडा करी ॥2॥
 कंथाकुमंडलु देहउपचारा । जाणवितो वारा अवश्वरु ॥3॥
 हरिकथा भोजन परवडी विस्तार । करोनि प्रकार सेवूं रुची ॥4॥
 तुका ह्याणे होय मनासी संवाद । आपुला चि वाद आपणांसी ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Trees and vines are our kinfolk, and the birds of the forest call to us in sweet voices. In such happiness the solitary life becomes dear; neither virtue nor fault clings to us there.

The sky is our canopy, the earth our seat, and the mind delights and plays freely. A patched garment and a water-pot serve the body, and the wind reminds us of life's impermanence.

The feast of hari-katha is our banquet, prepared in many flavors to be savored with relish. Says Tuka, here the mind converses with itself, debating its own truths in sweet solitude.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Trees and vines are our kin, and the forest birds call to us in sweet voices. In this happiness the solitary life grows dear. Here neither virtue nor fault clings to the body. The sky is our canopy, the earth our seat, and the mind delights and plays here freely. A patched cloak and a water-pot serve the body, and the wind reminds us how brief all things are. The telling of Hari's story is our feast, spread in many flavors to be tasted with relish. Tuka says: here the mind talks with itself, debating its own truths.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing the contentment of the renounced life by what it does and does not contain. In the forest the trees, vines, and birds become companions, and solitude turns sweet because here the play of merit and demerit no longer sticks to a person. He needs nothing but sky for a roof and earth for a seat; a single patched garment and a begging-bowl are enough body-care, and the passing wind keeps reminding him that everything is fleeting. His one banquet is hari-katha, the story of God told and savored. The final image is inward conversation: alone, the mind keeps company with itself and works out its own truth, and that is shown as fullness, not loneliness.

GATHA 2471

The Nature of God

Wonder, the infinite at the threshold

मराठी मूळ

अनंत ब्रह्मांडें । एके रोमीं ऐसें घेंडें ॥१॥
 तो या गिंळ्यांचे घरीं । उंबरा चढतां टेंका धरी ॥२॥
 मारी दैत्य गाडे । ज्यांचे पुराणीं पवाडे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कळा । अंगीं जयाच्या सकळा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Infinite universes rest on a single hair of His body, like a tiny ball. Yet this same Lord, in the home of cowherd folk, clings to the threshold as He tries to climb over it.

He slays mighty demons whose great deeds fill the Puranas. Says Tuka, all powers reside within His being.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Infinite universes rest on a single hair of His body, like a tiny ball. Yet this same Lord, in the house of the cowherds, clings to the threshold as He tries to climb over it. He slays mighty demons whose great deeds fill the Puranas. Tuka says: all powers live within His being.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the vast against the small in one short stroke. The Lord who carries infinite universes on a single hair, as if they were a little ball, is the same child in the cowherds' home who has to grip the doorsill to climb over it. He is the one who kills the great demons the Puranas sing about, and yet he toddles at a threshold. The poem is not solving the paradox but holding it up to wonder: every power rests in this one being, and the same God is both the unfathomable and the small child of Gokul.

GATHA 2472

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, remember the last hour

मराठी मूळ

सावधान ऐसें काय तें विचारा । आले हो संसारा सकळ ही ॥१॥
 अंतीं समयाचा करणें विचार । वेचती सादर घटिका पळें ॥२॥
 मंगळ हें नोहे कन्यापुत्रादिक । राहिला लौकिक अंतरपाट ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देव अंतरला दुरी । डोळ्या अंधारी पडलीसे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Be alert and consider this carefully, all you who have come into this world. You must reflect upon your final hour, for moments and seconds are being spent ceaselessly.

The so-called blessings of sons and daughters are not truly auspicious; worldly customs are merely a curtain. Says Tuka, God has become distant, and darkness has fallen over our eyes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Be alert and think on this carefully, all of you who have come into this world. You must reflect on your final hour, for the moments and seconds are being spent without stopping. The blessings of sons and daughters are not truly auspicious; worldly custom is only a curtain. Tuka says: God has been pushed far away, and darkness has fallen over our eyes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram calls everyone alive to a sober reckoning. Time is being spent every instant and cannot be recalled, so the one thing worth weighing is the hour of death and what you bring to it. He challenges what people count as blessings: children and family ties feel auspicious but are only a curtain over the real account, a worldly show. The closing line names the true loss in plain terms: in living for that show, people have let God slip far off and let darkness cover their sight. The push is to wake up now while the moments still remain.

GATHA 2473

The Necessity of Experience

Union, the dissolved self

मराठी मूळ

लवण मेळवितां जळें । काय उरलें निराळें ॥१॥
 तैसा समरस जालों । तुजमाजी हरपलों ॥ध्रु॥
 अग्नकर्पूराच्या मेळीं । काय उरली काजळी ॥२॥
 तुका ह्याने होती । तुझी माझी एक ज्योती ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When salt dissolves in water, nothing remains separate. In the same way, I have become one with You and have dissolved into You.

When camphor meets fire, what residue of soot remains? Says Tuka, Your flame and mine have become one single light.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When salt is mixed into water, what is left standing apart? In the same way I have become one taste with You. I have vanished into You. When camphor meets the fire, what soot is left behind? Tuka says: Your flame and mine have become one single light.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes union with God through two images that leave nothing of the smaller thing behind. Salt poured into water keeps no separate body; it becomes the water. Camphor set to flame burns away whole and leaves not even soot. By these he tells what has happened to him: he has dissolved into God so completely that there is no longer a separate self standing apart. The final image makes it mutual and complete, two flames becoming one light; this is not the devotee admiring God from a distance but the very disappearance of the line between them.

GATHA 2474

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, no joy in the world

मराठी मूळ

सुख नाही कोठें आलिया संसारीं । वांया हांवभरी होऊं नका ॥१॥
 दुःखबांदवडी आहे हा संसार । सुखाचा विचार नाही कोठें ॥२॥
 चवदा कल्पेवरी आयुष्य जयाला । परी तो राहिला ताटीखालीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे वेगीं जाय सुटोनियां । धरुनि हृदयामाजी हरि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is no happiness anywhere in this worldly life; do not be carried away by vain ambition. This world is a colony of suffering; there is no place here for lasting joy.

Even one whose life spans fourteen cosmic ages ended up crushed beneath death's door. Says Tuka, free yourself quickly by holding Hari within your heart.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is no happiness anywhere once you have come into this worldly life. Do not be swept away by vain craving. This world is a prison-house of sorrow; there is no real joy to be found here. Even one whose life lasts fourteen cosmic ages was still crushed beneath the door of death. Tuka says: free yourself quickly by holding Hari within your heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips away the hope that worldly life can be made to yield happiness. He calls the world a prison of sorrow and warns against vain craving, because the search for lasting joy here always comes up empty. To show how absolute death's reach is, he points to the one whose life spans fourteen cosmic ages: even that vast lifetime ended crushed under death's door, so length of days saves no one. The single way out he names is to hold Hari in the heart, and he urges that it be done quickly, before the moments run out. The harshness is meant to turn the hearer toward the one thing that lasts.

GATHA 2475

The Nature of God

Surrender, nothing too hard for God

मराठी मूळ

तुज करितां होय ऐसें कांहीं नाहीं । डोंगराची राई रंक राणा ॥१॥
 अशुभाचें शुभ करितां तुज कांही । अवघड नाही पांडुरंगा ॥२॥
 सोळा सहजर नारी ब्रह्मचारी कैसा । निराहारी दुर्वासा नवल नव्हे ॥३॥
 पंचभ्रतार द्रौपदी सती । करितां पितृशांती पुण्य धर्मा ॥४॥
 दशरथा पातकें ब्रह्महत्ये ऐसीं । नवल त्याचे कुशीं जन्म तुझा ॥५॥
 मुनेश्वरा नाहीं दोष अनुमात्र । भांडवितां सुत्र वध होती ॥६॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझे दोष ते कायी । सरता तुझा पायीं जालों देवा ॥७॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Nothing is impossible for You: You make paupers into kings, and mountains into level ground. Turning the inauspicious into the auspicious is no difficulty for You, O Panduranga.

You remained a celibate among sixteen thousand queens; that Durvasa fasted was nothing remarkable. Draupadi with five husbands was yet called a chaste woman, and her merit blessed her ancestors.

Even Dasharatha bore sins as grave as the slaying of a Brahmin, yet it was a wonder that You were born from his lineage. When great sages in anger caused the destruction of clans, no fault touched them.

Says Tuka, what then are my sins? I have surrendered at Your feet, O Lord.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Nothing is impossible for You. You make paupers into kings, and mountains into level ground. To turn the inauspicious into the auspicious is no hard thing for You, O Panduranga. You stayed a celibate among sixteen thousand queens; that Durvasa fasted is no great wonder beside this. Draupadi had five husbands and was still called a chaste woman, and her merit blessed her ancestors. Dasharatha bore sins as heavy as the killing of a Brahmin, yet the wonder is that You were born in his line. When great sages in anger destroyed whole clans, no fault touched them. Tuka says: what then are my sins? I have been received at Your feet, O Lord.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram builds his case for his own acceptance out of God's power to overturn every measure. He begins with the rule: nothing is impossible for Panduranga, who lifts paupers to thrones and levels mountains, and who can turn the inauspicious into the auspicious. Then he reads the old stories the same way, as places where the usual reckoning was overturned: Krishna chaste among thousands of queens, Draupadi chaste with five husbands, even sin-laden Dasharatha made worthy of God's birth in his line, and angry sages left blameless after great destruction. The argument lands on himself: if God can do all that, his own sins are no obstacle, for he has already been received at God's feet. It is a plea built on God's freedom, not on his own worth.

GATHA 2476

Krishna Leela

Krishna, the mother singing the soul to rest

मराठी मूळ

जननिया बाळका रे घातलें पाळणा । पंचतत्त्वीं जडियेल्या वारतिया चहूं कोणा । अखंड जडियेल्या तया ढाळ
 अंगणा । वैखरी धरुनि हातीं भाव दावी खेळणा ॥1॥

निजीं रे निजीं आतां । ह्यणोनि परिये दे माता । खेळतां कष्टलासी बाळा तूं रे नेणतां । निजीं रे निजीं आतां ॥ध्रु॥
 खेळतां बाहेरि रे मुला लोकांच्या सवें । बागुल काळतोंडा नाहीं नेतो तें ठावें । खेळतां दिशचत्ता रे देखोनि तें न्यावें ।
 ह्यणोनि सांगें तुज शीघ्र वचन पाळावें॥2॥

संचित मागें तुज शुद्ध होतें सांगाती । तेणें तुज वांचविलें वेरझारिया हातीं । आणीक नेली मागें काय जाणों तीं
 किती । आलासि येथवरि थोरपुण्यें बहुतीं ॥3॥

खेळतां शुक देवा तो रे लागला पाठीं । लपाला वरुषें बारा तिये मातेचे पोटीं । रिघतां बाहेरि रे पळे घेऊनि कासोटी
 । ते चि परी जाली स्वामी भेणें रिघें कपाटीं ॥4॥

खेळतां चक्रवर्ती जनका लागला धाक । पडिला अग्नीमाजी पाव जळत एक । भरलासे कांप अंगीं सुख नाठवें
 दुःख । आप पर तें ही नाहीं देहभाव सकळक ॥5॥

सिन्ध्रीया चक्रवर्ती कव पडिली अवचिति । धीट तो न भे तया मास कापिलें हातीं । टाकिलें तयावरी खुणें गोविला
 अंतीं । पावला मायबाप हिरोन घेतला हातीं ॥6॥

बांधलें अजामेळा वेश्यागणीका कैसी । मारिली हाक धाकें कळलें मायबापासी । घातली धांव नेटें वेगीं पावला
 त्यासी । हिरोनि नेलीं दोघें आपणयां तीं पासी ॥7॥

धरुनी आठवू रे बाळा राहें निश्चळ । खेळतां दिशचत्ता रे नको जाऊं बरळ । टोंकताहे तुजलागीं दिवस लेखूनी काळ
 । मग नेदी आठवूं रे नेत्रीं घालीं पडळ ॥8॥

ऐसी तीं कृपावंतें बाळा मोहिलें चित्त । सुस्वरें कंठ गाय मधुर आणि संगीत । तेणें तें चि चित्त राहे होऊनियां निवांत
 । पावती तुका ह्यणे नाहीं विश्वास ते घात ॥9॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The mother has placed her infant in the cradle, woven of the five elements and watched over by the four guardians of speech. She shows the child playthings of devotion through the power of articulate speech.

'Sleep now, sleep,' says the mother, cradling the child. 'You have tired yourself with play, O unknowing babe, sleep now.' Playing outside with worldly people, the child does not know that the dark-faced demon of death may carry him away.

Seeing the heedless child at play, death may seize him; so she urges: obey my words swiftly. Past merit was your companion that saved you from the clutches of tormentors.

Who knows how many others were carried away before; only by great merit have you come this far. Playing, Shuka was pursued by desire, and he hid twelve years in his mother's womb.

Emerging, he ran clutching his loincloth, and in that same manner, take shelter behind the door of devotion. Playing, the emperor Janaka was seized by fear; one foot fell into the fire.

His body trembled, and neither joy nor sorrow could be felt. The emperor Shibi was tested unexpectedly; fearless, he cut flesh from his own hand.

When all was tested, his divine parents snatched him back. Ajamela was bound to a courtesan's company; in terror he cried out, and his divine parents heard.

They rushed to save him and drew the pair to themselves. So, O child, hold fast to this remembrance and remain still.

Do not wander heedless in play. Death counts your days and tallies them; then it blinds your eyes and gives no chance to remember.

Such are those compassionate parents who have captivated the child's chitta, singing sweetly in melodious voice. By that singing the mind becomes calm and still.

Says Tuka, those who lack faith are destroyed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The mother has laid her child in the cradle, woven of the five elements and watched at its four corners. With the power of speech in her hand she shows the child the playthings of devotion. 'Sleep now, sleep,' the mother says, rocking the child. 'You have worn yourself out with play, O unknowing babe. Sleep now.' Playing outside with worldly people, the child does not know that the dark-faced demon of death may carry him off. Seeing the heedless child at play, death may seize him; so she says, obey my words at once. Past good deeds were your companion and saved you from the hands of your tormentors. How many others were carried off before, who can say? Only by great merit have you come this far. While he played, desire chased Shuka, and he hid twelve years in his mother's womb. He came out and ran clutching his loincloth; in that same way, master, take shelter behind the door of devotion. While he played, the emperor Janaka was seized by fear; one foot fell into the fire. His body shook; he could feel neither joy nor sorrow. No self, no other, no sense of the body remained. The emperor Shibi was tested without warning; fearless, he cut the flesh from his own hand. When all had been tested, his divine parents snatched him back and took him by the hand. Ajamela was bound to a courtesan's company; in terror he cried out, and his divine parents heard. They rushed to him at once, and drew the pair back to themselves. So, O child, hold fast to this remembrance and stay still. Do not wander heedless in play. Death is counting your days and reckoning your time; then it blinds your eyes and gives no chance to remember. Such are those merciful parents who have charmed the child's heart, singing sweetly in a melodious voice. By that singing the mind grows calm and still. Tuka says: those who have no faith are destroyed.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram frames the whole spiritual life as a mother singing her child toward sleep, where the mother is grace and the child is the soul, the cradle being the body woven of the five elements. The mother's lullaby is the warning underneath: the dark-faced demon of death watches the child who plays heedlessly among worldly people, and only past merit has kept it from being carried off, as so many others were. He stacks up the old examples to show what saved each one: Shuka pursued by desire who hid and then ran for shelter, Janaka unshaken even with a foot in the fire, Shibi cutting his own flesh, Ajamela crying out God's name from a courtesan's house; in each case the divine parents seized the soul back at the end. The charge to the child is to hold the remembrance and stay still, because death is tallying the days and will at last blind the eyes so no remembrance is possible. The closing line gives the stakes without softening them: the soul that will not trust this singing mother is lost.

GATHA 2477

Social Criticism

Social criticism, devotion for hire

मराठी मूळ

उभ्या बाजारांत कथा । हे तों नावडे पंढरिनाथा ॥१॥
 अवघें पोटासाठीं ढोंग । तेथें कैचा पांडुरंग ॥२॥
 लावी अनुसंधान । कांहीं देईल ह्मणऊन ॥३॥
 काय केलें रांडलेंका । तुला राजी नाहीं तुका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Performing katha in the open marketplace does not please Pandharinath. It is all pretense for the sake of the belly; where is Panduranga in that? One fixes one's attention hoping someone will give something.

Says Tuka, what have you accomplished, you wretch? Tuka is not pleased with you.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Telling the sacred story out in the open marketplace: Pandharinath does not love that. It is all a show for the sake of the belly. Where is Panduranga in that? You fix your attention on the crowd, hoping someone will give you something. Tuka says: what have you done, you wretch? Tuka is not pleased with you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns on the performer who recites holy katha as a way to earn. The marketplace is not the problem; the motive is. When the story is told to fill the belly and the eyes are watching the crowd for a coin, Vitthal is simply not there in it, however pious the words sound. The poet does not spare himself the harsh word, and the danger he names is one any reciter or teacher can fall into: the moment the audience becomes a source of income, attention slides off God and onto what they might give. He ends by withholding the one approval that matters, his own honest verdict, because God is not pleased with worship done for pay.

GATHA 2478

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the child of the Mother

मराठी मूळ

असोत लोकांचे बोल शिरावरी । माझी मज बरी विठाबाई ॥१॥
 आपंगिलें मज आहे ते कृपाळु । बहुत कनवाळु अंतरीची ॥२॥
 वेदशास्त्रें जिशी वणिनती पुराणें । तिचें मी पोसणें लडिवाळ ॥३॥
 जिचें नाम कामधेनु कल्पतरु । तिचें मी लेकरुं तुका ह्मणे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let the words of the world rest upon my head; my Vithabai is good to me. She has embraced me; she is gracious, full of compassion from within.

The Vedas, Shastras, and Puranas all sing her praise; I am her pampered child. She whose name is the Wish-fulfilling Cow and the Wish-granting Tree, Says Tuka, I am her little one.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let the words of people sit on my head; my Vithabai is good to me. She has taken me up; she is kind, full of mercy within. The Vedas, the Shastras, the Puranas all sing of her; I am her pampered child. Her name is the wish-granting cow, the wish-granting tree. Tuka says: I am her little one.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers slander with belonging. He lets the world's words rest on his head, neither fighting them nor minding them, because his standing does not come from people but from his Mother Vithabai. The scriptures that the world reveres are themselves only praising her, so her child has nothing to prove to anyone. He calls her Kamadhenu and Kalpataru, the cow and the tree that give whatever is asked, and then sets all that grandeur aside for one small word: he is simply her child. The poem's claim is that being held by God makes the opinion of the crowd weightless.

GATHA 2479

Devotion to Vitthal

Pilgrimage, Pandhari above all

मराठी मूळ

वाराणसी गया पाहिली द्वारका । परी नये तुका पंढरीच्या ॥१॥
पंढरीसी नाहीं कोणा अभिमान । पायां पडे जन एकमेका ॥२॥
तुका ह्मणे जाय एकवेळ पंढरी । तयाचिये घरीं यम न ये ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have visited Varanasi, Gaya, and Dwaraka, but none can compare to Pandhari. In Pandhari no one holds pride; people bow at one another's feet.

Says Tuka, whoever visits Pandhari even once, the lord of death will never come to his door.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have seen Varanasi, Gaya, Dwaraka; but none comes near to Pandhari. In Pandhari no one carries pride; people fall at one another's feet. Tuka says: go to Pandhari even once, and the lord of death will not come to that one's house.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram ranks the holy places and puts Pandhari first, naming the great pilgrimage cities he has actually visited only to set them below it. What makes Pandhari highest is not its fame but its spirit: there is no pride there, and devotees bow to one another instead of competing for rank. That mutual bowing, equals lowering themselves before equals, is the mark of true pilgrimage. The closing line is the high promise of the bhakti path: one true visit, made in that spirit, frees a person from the fear of death itself.

GATHA 2480

Renunciation

Renunciation, the price God answers

मराठी मूळ

सांडुनियां सर्व लौकिकाची लाज । आळवा यदुराज भक्तिभावे ॥१॥
 पाहूनियां झाडें वरबडूनि पाला । खाऊनि विठ्ठला आळवावे ॥२॥
 वेंचूनियां चिंध्या भरूनियां धागा । गुंडाळूनि ढुंगा आळवावे ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे ऐसें मांडिल्या निर्वाण । तया नारायण उपेक्षीना ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Abandoning all worldly shame, call upon Yaduraja with devotion. Go looking at trees, stripping their bark, and eating what you find, and still call upon Vitthal.

Gather rags, twist them into thread, wrap them around your waist, and call upon Him. Says Tuka, when one sets out with such utter resolve, Narayana will never forsake that soul.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Throw away all the world's shame, and call on Yaduraja with the cry of a beggar. Look for trees, strip their leaves, eat them, and still call on Vitthal. Gather rags, twist them into thread, wrap them around your waist, and call. Tuka says: when you stage your last stand like this, Narayana will not pass that one by.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the cost of calling on God for real, and he does not soften it. Worldly shame is the first thing to drop; then comfort goes, until a person is eating stripped leaves and clothed in rags twisted from scraps. He is not glorifying poverty for its own sake; he is naming the depth of surrender at which the cry becomes total. The Marathi word nirvana here means a last stand, the point past which there is nothing held back. That is the claim: when someone gives up everything down to dignity and food and still keeps crying out, Narayana does not ignore them.

GATHA 2481

Worldly Metaphors

Discrimination, saint and crowd are not one

मराठी मूळ

दहएंचिया अंगीं निघे ताक लोणी । एका मोलें दोन्ही मागों नये ॥१॥
 आकाशाचे पोटीं चंद्र तारांगणें । दोहींशी समान पाहों नये ॥२॥
 पृथ्वीचा पोटीं हिरा गारगोटी । दोहोंसी समसाटी करूं नये ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तैसे संत आणि जन । दोहींसी समान भजूं नये ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

From the same cow come both buttermilk and butter; one should not demand both for the price of one. In the belly of the sky dwell both the moon and the stars; one should not regard them as equal.

In the belly of the earth lie both diamonds and common pebbles; one should not treat them alike. Says Tuka, so it is with saints and ordinary folk; one should not worship them in the same way.

IN PLAIN WORDS

From the same cow come buttermilk and butter; you cannot ask for both at one price. In the sky's belly are the moon and the stars; do not look at the two as equal. In the earth's belly lie the diamond and the pebble; do not treat the two as the same. Tuka says: so it is with saints and ordinary people; do not worship the two the same way.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram teaches discernment through three plain pictures: buttermilk and butter, moon and stars, diamond and common stone. In each pair the two things come from one source and share a place, yet they are not of one worth, and pretending otherwise cheats the higher thing. He then lands the point: saints and ordinary folk are like this. The teaching is not contempt for ordinary people; it is a warning against flattening the difference, against giving a saint and a crowd the same regard and so missing what a saint actually is.

GATHA 2482

Longing and Separation

Longing, the threat of love

मराठी मूळ

तेरा दिवस जाले निश्चक्र करितां । न पवसी अनंता मायबापा ॥१॥
 पाषाणांची खोळ घेउनि बैसलासी । काय हृषीकेशी जालें तुज ॥२॥
 तुजवरी आतां प्राण मी तजीन । हत्या मी घालीन पांडुरंगा ॥३॥
 फार विठाबाई धरिली तुझी आस । करीन जीवा नास पांडुरंगा ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Thirteen days have passed as I stand here waiting, and still You do not come, O Ananta, my mother and father. You sit there wrapped in a shell of stone.

What has happened to You, O Hrishikeshi? I will now give up my life before You. I will lay the blame of my death upon You, O Panduranga.

I have placed all my hope in You, Vithabai; I will destroy my very life, O Panduranga. Says Tuka, I have resolved utterly. I will lay down my life at Your door.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Thirteen days have passed as I keep my fast and watch, and still you do not come, Ananta, my mother and father. You sit there wrapped in a shell of stone. What has happened to you, Hrishikeshi? Now I will give up my life upon you. I will lay the guilt of a death on you, Panduranga. Long, Vithabai, I have held my hope on you; I will destroy my own life, Panduranga. Tuka says: now I have made my last stand. I will lay down this life at your door.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the lover's threat, the boldest move in bhakti, spoken to a God who seems to have gone silent and still as the stone image he stands in. Thirteen days of fasting and waiting have brought no answer, so Tukaram turns to the one weapon a child has against a parent who will not respond: he threatens to die on God's doorstep and lay the blame for that death on God himself. The harshness is not unbelief; it is the opposite, the certainty that he is truly God's child and that God cannot finally bear the guilt of letting him perish. It is despair used as the last, most desperate form of prayer.

GATHA 2483

Renunciation

Renunciation, falling at the shelter

मराठी मूळ

लोक फार वाखा अमंगळ जाला । त्याचा त्याग केला पांडुरंगा ॥१॥
 विषयां वंचलों मीपणा मुकलों । शरण तुज आलों पांडुरंगा ॥२॥
 घर दार अवधीं तजिलीं नारायणा । जीवींच्या जीवना पांडुरंगा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने पडिलों पुंडलिकापाशीं । धांव हृषीकेशी आंळगीं मज ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The world has grown foul and inauspicious, so I have renounced it, O Panduranga. I have forsaken sense pleasures, given up my ego, and come to Your shelter, O Panduranga.

I have abandoned home and family, O Narayana, O life of my life, Panduranga. Says Tuka, I have fallen at Pundalik's feet. Rush to me, O Hrishikeshi, and embrace me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

People have grown many and foul and unholy, so I have left them, Panduranga. I have been cheated of the senses' pleasures, I have lost my I-ness, I have come to your shelter, Panduranga. I have given up house and door, all of it, Narayana, life of my life, Panduranga. Tuka says: I have fallen here at Pundalik's feet. Run, Hrishikeshi, take me in your arms.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram traces a withdrawal that ends in surrender. He has turned from a world he finds foul, given up the pleasures of the senses, let go even of his ego, and walked away from home and family. But the poem is not about what he renounced; it is about where he landed. Having emptied his hands, he falls at Pundalik's feet at Pandhari, the very spot that brought Vitthal there, and begs God to come running and embrace him. Renunciation here is only the clearing away; the whole weight of the poem rests on the open-armed welcome he is asking for.

GATHA 2484

Confession and Sin

Confession, bound to the senses

मराठी मूळ

इंद्रियांचीं दिनें । आह्मी केलों नारायणें ॥१॥
 ह्मणऊनि ऐसें सोसीं । काय सांगों कोणांपाशी ॥२॥
 नाहीं अंगीं बळ । त्याग करींसा सकळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मोटें । प्रारब्ध होतें खोटें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Narayana made me a slave of the senses. That is why I endure such suffering.

To whom can I even tell my plight? I have no strength in my body to renounce everything. Says Tuka, my destiny has been exceedingly cruel.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Narayana made me a slave of the senses. So I bear it like this; to whom shall I even tell it? There is no strength in my body to renounce it all. Tuka says: in a great heap my destiny has come out crooked.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a confession of helplessness, and it dares to lay the bondage at God's own door: it was Narayana who made him a slave of the senses. There is no one to complain to, because the maker of the trouble is also the only one who could end it. Tukaram admits plainly that he does not have the strength in himself to renounce everything, so he cannot lift the burden by willpower. Naming his destiny as crooked is not self-pity for its own sake; it is the honesty that comes before grace, the admission that he cannot save himself and must be carried.

GATHA 2485

Confession and Sin

Confession, shelter in neither world

मराठी मूळ

हातीं धरूं जावें । तेणें परतें चि व्हावें ॥१॥
 ऐसा कां हो आला वांटा । हीन भाग्याचा करंटा ॥२॥
 देव ना संसार । दोहीं ठायीं नाहीं थार ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पीक । भूमि न दे न मिळे भीक ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whatever I reach for slips away from my hand. What wretched fate is this, the lot of the ill-fortuned? I belong neither to God nor to worldly life; I find no shelter in either place.

Says Tuka, the land yields no harvest, and even begging brings nothing.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I go to hold a thing in my hand, and by that very reaching it slips away. Why has such a lot come to me, the empty share of a luckless man? Not God, not the world: in neither place do I find a footing. Tuka says: the land gives no crop, and begging brings nothing either.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from the worst middle place, where nothing holds. Whatever he reaches for slides off, and he calls himself the luckless one whose share has come out empty. The sharp ache is that he fits nowhere: he has not arrived in God, and he has let go of the world, so neither side gives him ground to stand on. The closing images, a field that yields no harvest and a begging bowl that stays empty, name a hunger with no relief from either direction. It is the honest cry of a seeker caught between two worlds, owning the barrenness rather than pretending he is settled.

GATHA 2486

Worldly Metaphors

Social criticism, devotion that is faked

मराठी मूळ

मोलें घातलें रडाया । नाहीं असुं आणि माया ॥१॥
 तैसा भक्तिवाद काय । रंगबेगडीचा न्याय ॥२॥
 वेठी धरिल्या दावी भाव । मागें पळायचा पाव ॥३॥
 काजव्याच्या ज्योती । तुका ह्मणे न लगे वाती ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Hiring someone to weep does not bring real tears or genuine love. In the same way, what value has mere talk of devotion? It is the logic of colored glass, not true gems.

Under compulsion one makes a show of feeling, but behind it lies the urge to flee. Says Tuka, the light of a firefly needs no wick.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Hire someone to weep, and there is no real grief and no love in it. Just so, what is mere talk of devotion worth? It is the logic of colored glass passed off as a jewel. Held to it by force, a person makes a show of feeling, but behind it the foot is already turned to run. Tuka says: the light of a firefly needs no wick.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram exposes counterfeit devotion with two cutting pictures. A hired mourner weeps on cue, but there is no grief and no love behind the tears; talk of bhakti without real feeling is exactly that, colored glass sold as a gem. He notices the tell of the fake: a person pressed into devotion will perform the look of feeling while inwardly already turning to flee. The closing image catches the difference between forced and genuine: a firefly carries its own light and needs no wick, no outside fuel, just as true devotion glows from within and does not have to be propped up by show or pressure.

GATHA 2487

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the use of being born

मराठी मूळ

तरि च जन्मा यावें । दास विठ्ठलाचें व्हावें ॥१॥
 नाही तरि काय थोडीं । श्वानशूकरें बापुडीं ॥२॥
 ज्याल्याचें तें फळ । अंगीं लागों नेदी मळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे भले । ज्याच्या नावें मानवलें ॥३॥
 ॥ लळतें ९ ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Only then is this birth worthwhile: if one becomes a servant of Vitthal. Otherwise, what scarcity is there of wretched dogs and pigs? The fruit of being born should be that no impurity clings to you.

Says Tuka, blessed are those in whose name humanity finds its honor.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Then alone is it worth coming to birth: to become the servant of Vitthal. Otherwise, is there any shortage of poor dogs and pigs? The fruit of having lived should be that no filth clings to your body. Tuka says: blessed are those by whose name humanity itself is honored.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks what a human birth is actually for. His answer is blunt: it is worth taking only if it is spent as a servant of Vitthal, because if mere living were the point, the world has no shortage of animals already doing that. The fruit he names is purity, a life that leaves no defilement clinging to it. He ends by lifting up the rare souls who reach that mark, saying their very name brings honor to the whole human kind. The poem's edge is its low comparison: without devotion, a human life is no higher than a stray animal's.

GATHA 2488

The Saints

The saints, God made present

मराठी मूळ

देव ते संत देव ते संत । निमित्त त्या प्रतिमा ॥१॥
 मी तों सांगतसें भावें । असो ठावें सकळां ॥२॥
 निराकारी ओस दिशा । येथें इच्छा पुरतसे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे रोकडें केणें । सेवितां येणें पोट धाय ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The saints are God; the saints are God. Images are only a representation.

I say this with true feeling; let it be known to all. In the formless absolute, the directions stand empty; but here in the saints, all desires are fulfilled.

Says Tuka, this is ready nourishment. Partaking of it, one's hunger is truly satisfied.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The saints are God, the saints are God; the image is only an occasion. I am telling you this in true feeling; let it be known to everyone. In the formless, the directions stand empty; here, with the saints, the wish is fulfilled. Tuka says: this is ready goods. Take it, and the belly is filled.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes a bold claim and stands behind it openly: the living saints are God, and the stone image is only a starting point, an occasion for worship rather than the fullness of it. He does not hide this teaching; he wants it known to all. His reason is practical, not abstract: the formless absolute is real but empty to the seeker, with no direction to turn toward, while the saint is God in a form that meets you and answers. The closing image is of food ready at hand: the company of saints is nourishment you can take now and be filled, not a far promise.

GATHA 2489

Sacred Stories

Adoration, the playful Lord beyond grasp

मराठी मूळ

न कळे माव मुनि मागे एकी अंतुरी । साठी संवत्सरां जन्म तया उदरीं ॥1॥
 कैसा आकळे गे माये चपळ वो । त्रिभुवनव्यापक सकळ वो ॥घु॥
 हनुमंता भेटी गर्व हरिला दोहींचा । गरुडा विटंबना रूपा सत्यभामेच्या ॥2॥
 द्रौपदीचा भेद पुरविला समयीं । ऋषि फळवनीं देंठीं लावितां ठायीं ॥3॥
 अर्जुनाच्या रथीं कपि स्तंभीं ठेविला । दोहीं पैज तेथें गर्व हरी दादुला ॥4॥
 भावभक्ती सत्त्वगुण जाला दुर्जना । तुका ह्याने सकळां छंदें खेळे आपण ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

His illusions are beyond understanding. A sage sought a single bedsheet and spent sixty years gestating in a womb for it.

How can one grasp the swift and playful One, O mother, who pervades all three worlds? In His meeting with Hanuman, the pride of both was dissolved. Through Satyabhama's form, He humbled Garuda.

He fulfilled Draupadi's need at the critical moment and restored fruits to their stems for the sages. When Arjuna set a monkey upon his chariot banner, God resolved the wager and humbled both parties' pride.

Says Tuka, He plays with all beings according to their temperament, whether they be virtuous or wicked.

IN PLAIN WORDS

His illusions cannot be understood. A sage once wanted a single bedsheet, and for it he lay sixty years in a womb. How can you grasp him, O mother? He is swift; he is playful; he fills all three worlds. When he met Hanuman, the pride of both was taken away. Through Satyabhama's form he humbled Garuda. He met Draupadi's need at the moment she cried out. He set the fruits back on their stems for the sages. On Arjuna's chariot he placed the monkey on the banner. He settled the wager between the two and took away the pride of both. With love and devotion even a wicked man turns good. Tuka says: he plays with everyone, each in their own way.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praying about a God who cannot be measured, and he piles up old stories to show it. He names how this Lord pervades all three worlds yet stays swift and playful, dissolving pride wherever he meets it: Hanuman's, Garuda's, the wager on Arjuna's banner. He meets Draupadi at the breaking point and restores the sages' fruit, small mercy and great power side by side. The point is that the same God who humbles the proud also turns the wicked good through love, and that no one stands outside his play. Tukaram leaves you not with a doctrine but with the sense that the One you cannot grasp is already handling each person according to their own nature.

GATHA 2490

Devotion to Vitthal

Bold devotion, holding God to account

मराठी मूळ

उदारा कृपाळा अंगा देवांच्या देवा । तुजसर्वे पण आतां आमुचा दावा ॥१॥
 कैसा जासी सांग आतां मजपासुनी । केलें वाताहात दिले संसारा पाणी ॥२॥
 अवधीं आवरुनि तुझे लाविलीं पाठीं । आतां त्या विसर सोहंकोहंच्या गोष्टी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां चरणीं घातली मिठी । पडिली ते पडो तुह्या आह्मांसी तुटी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O generous and compassionate One, O God of gods, our contest is now with You. How will You escape from me now? You have overturned everything and drowned worldly life.

I have gathered all my attachments and set them upon Your trail. Now forget those debates of 'I am He' and 'Who am I.' Says Tuka, I have seized Your feet in a firm embrace. Let whatever may happen come; even if it breaks the bond between us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Generous one, compassionate one, God of gods: now my contest is with you. Tell me, how will you get away from me now? You have overturned everything; you have drowned my worldly life. I have gathered all my attachments and set them on your trail. Now forget those debates of 'I am He' and 'Who am I.' Tuka says: I have seized your feet in a tight embrace. Let whatever falls, fall; even if it breaks the bond between us.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns prayer into a wrestling match he intends to win. Having let God drown his worldly life, he refuses to let God slip away, and he sics all his old attachments onto God's trail so the Lord cannot escape. He sets aside the lofty Vedantic questions of identity, 'I am He,' 'Who am I,' as debates he no longer needs once he has the feet

themselves. The closing line is the stake: he has clamped onto God's feet and will not let go, even if the grip itself snaps the bond. It is the boldness of total surrender, where clinging becomes its own argument.

GATHA 2491

The Power of the Name

The Name, the body made clean

मराठी मूळ

जाली होती काया । बहु मळीन देवराया ॥१॥
 तुमच्या उजळली नामें । चित्त प्रक्षिळलें प्रेमें ॥२॥
 अनुतापें झाला झाडा । प्रारब्धाचा केला तोडा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देह पायीं । ठेवूनि झालों उतराई ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My body had become very impure, O Lord. But it was cleansed and illumined by Your name, and my chitta was washed pure by love.

Through remorse, the burden of past destiny was swept away and cut loose. Says Tuka, I placed my body at Your feet and became free of all debt.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My body had grown very impure, O Lord. Your name made it bright again; love washed my mind clean. Through remorse the whole account was swept clear; the knot of past karma was cut. Tuka says: I laid my body at your feet, and my debt was paid.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a cleansing he did not work by his own merit. A body grown impure is made bright by the Name; the mind is washed not by ritual but by love. He names remorse as the broom that sweeps the old account away and cuts the binding thread of past karma. The final act is to lay the whole body at God's feet, and in that surrender the debt is settled. The poem holds out the Name and remorse as enough, with no penance added.

GATHA 2492

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, every day a festival

मराठी मूळ

आजि आनंदु रे एकी परमानंदु रे । जया श्रुति नेति नेति ह्मणती गोविंदु रे ॥१॥
 विठोबाचीं वेडीं आह्मां आनंदु सदा । गाऊं नाचों वाऊं टाळी रंजवूं गोविंदा ॥२॥
 सदा सन सांत आह्मां नित्य दिवाळी । आनंदें निर्भर आमचा कैवारी बळी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं जन्ममरणांचा धाक । संत सनकादिक तें आमचें कवतुक ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Today there is bliss, supreme bliss. The Vedas call Him 'not this, not this,' and yet He is Govinda.

We who are mad for Vithoba live in constant joy; we sing, we dance, we clap, and we delight Govinda. Every day is a festival for us, every day a Diwali.

Our mighty protector fills us with boundless joy. Says Tuka, we have no fear of birth and death. The saints like Sanaka are our kin and our delight.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Today there is bliss, the one supreme bliss. The Vedas say of him 'not this, not this,' and he is Govinda. We who are mad for Vithoba are always glad. We sing, we dance, we clap, we delight Govinda. Every day is good for us; every day is Diwali. Our strong protector fills us full with joy. Tuka says: we have no fear of birth and death. The saints like Sanaka are our kin and our play.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the dry negations of the Vedas, 'not this, not this,' beside a name you can sing, and the singing wins. He says the One the scriptures can only point to by denial is simply Govinda, near enough to dance for. To be 'mad for Vithoba' is not loss but constant festival, every ordinary day a Diwali. The reward he names is concrete: because their protector is strong, the lovers lose the fear of birth and death. The saints of old become not distant authorities but kin in the same joy.

GATHA 2493

The Power of the Name

The Name, the seed-mantra that costs nothing

मराठी मूळ

प्राणियां एक बीजमंत्र उच्चारिं । प्रतिदिनीं रामकृष्ण ह्यण कां मुरारि ॥१॥
 हें चि साधन रे तुज सर्व सिद्धींचे । नाम उच्चारिं पां गोपाळाचें वाचे ॥२॥
 उपास पारणें न लगे वनसेवन । न लगे धूम्रपान पंचाअग्नितापन ॥३॥
 फुकाचें सुखाचें कांहीं न वेचें भांडार । कोटी यज्ञां परिस तुका ह्यणे हें सार ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O beings, chant this one seed-mantra: every day say Rama, Krishna, Murari. This alone is the means to all perfections.

Let your mouth utter the name of Gopala. No fasting or feasting is needed, no retreat to forests, no burning of sacred fires, no five-fire penance.

This treasure is free and joyful, and costs nothing at all. Says Tuka, it surpasses tens of millions of sacrifices; this is the essence.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O living beings, say this one seed-mantra. Every day say Rama, Krishna, Murari. This alone is the means to every perfection. Let your mouth speak the name of Gopala. You need no fasting, no breaking of fasts; no going off to the forest; no breathing of smoke; no penance among five fires. This treasure is free and full of joy; it costs you nothing. Tuka says: it surpasses ten million sacrifices. This is the heart of it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram puts the whole apparatus of religion on one side and a single name on the other. He lists the hard disciplines, fasting and feasting, forest retreat, smoke and the five-fire penance, and waves them all away as unnecessary. Against them he sets the bare repetition of Rama, Krishna, Murari, Gopala, which he says reaches every perfection. The selling point is the price: this means is free, joyful, and open to anyone with a mouth, while the costly sacrifices it outstrips are not. He calls it the essence, the one thing that need not be earned.

GATHA 2494

The Power of the Name

The Name, the fruitful birth

मराठी मूळ

विठ्ठल कीर्तनाचे अंतीं । जय जय हरी जे ह्यणती ॥१॥

बैसोनि हरिकथेसी । होय सावध चित्तासी ॥२॥

तुका ह्यणे त्याचा जन्म । सुफळ जाला भवक्रम ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who at the end of Vitthal's kirtan say 'Jai Jai Hari,' and those who sit attentively at hari-katha with a focused mind, Says Tuka, their birth has become fruitful and their cycle of worldly existence is complete.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who, at the end of Vitthal's kirtan, say 'Jai Jai Hari'; those who sit at hari-katha and keep their mind awake and attentive: Tuka says: their birth has borne fruit, and their round of worldly life is fulfilled.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lowers the bar of salvation to the reach of an ordinary listener. He names two small acts: joining the cry of 'Jai Jai Hari' as the kirtan ends, and sitting through the telling of God's story with an awake, attentive mind. To these he attaches the largest possible reward, a birth made fruitful and the whole cycle of worldly existence brought to its completion. The point is that presence and attention at the singing are themselves the saving deed; nothing grander is required.

GATHA 2495

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, say Rama or perish

मराठी मूळ

न चलवे पंथ वेच नसतां पालवीं । शरीर विटंबिलें वाटे भीक मागावी ॥१॥
 न करीं रे तैसें आपआपणां । नित्य राम राम तुह्मी सकळ ह्मणा ॥२॥
 राम ह्मणवितां रांडा पोरें निरविशी । पडसी यमा हांतीं जाचविती चौःयाशी ॥२॥
 मुखीं नाहीं राम तो ही आत्महत्यारा । तुका ह्मणे लाज नाहीं तया गंधारा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The path cannot be walked without provisions in hand; the body suffers, and one must beg along the way. Do not do this to yourself.

All of you, constantly say Rama, Rama. If you waste time pampering wife and children without uttering Rama's name, you will fall into Yama's hands and be tormented through eighty-four lakh births.

One whose mouth never holds Rama's name is a self-slayer. Says Tuka, such a fool has no shame at all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You cannot walk the road with no provisions in your bundle; the body is ruined, and you end up begging along the way. Do not do this to yourselves. All of you, say Rama, Rama, every day. If you spend your time fussing over wife and children and never call Rama's name, you will fall into Yama's hands, and the eighty-four lakh births will torment you. The one whose mouth never holds Rama is his own murderer. Tuka says: such a fool has no shame at all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses the image of a traveler with an empty bundle to warn about a life without the Name. The provisions for the road are Rama's name said daily; without them the journey ends in ruin and begging. He names the stake plainly: time spent only on family while the Name goes unsaid leads to Yama and the long torment of countless rebirths. His sharpest word, that the nameless man is his own killer, points not at any one person but at the self-neglect of anyone who lets the days pass without it. The shamelessness he scorns is a pattern to catch in oneself, the slow squandering of the one provision that matters.

GATHA 2496

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the moth and the raft of stone

मराठी मूळ

थडियेसी निघतां पाषाणांच्या सांगडी । बुडतां मध्यभागीं तेथें कोण घाली उडी ॥१॥
 न करी रे तैसें आपआपणा । पतंग जाय वांयां जीवें ज्योती घालूनियां ॥२॥
 सावधपणें सोमवल वाटी भरोनियां प्याला । मरणा अंतीं वैद्य बोलावितो गहिला ॥२॥
 तुकाह्मणे करीं ठायींचा चि विचार । जवें नाहीं पातला यमाचा किंकर ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A raft of stones may carry you near the shore, but when it sinks in midstream, who will leap in to save you? Do not do this to yourself. A moth dies in vain by rushing into the flame.

One who carelessly drinks poison in a full cup calls for a physician only when death draws near. Says Tuka, make your resolve now, while Yama's messenger has not yet arrived.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A raft of stones may carry you to the edge of the water, but when it sinks midstream, who will leap in to save you? Do not do this to yourself. The moth dies for nothing, throwing its life into the flame. Carelessly you fill the cup and drink the poison, and only when death is near do you send for the doctor in a panic. Tuka says: settle the matter now, here, before Yama's servant has arrived.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strings together three pictures of a danger entered with open eyes. A raft of stone looks like passage but sinks in deep water, and no one will dive after you; the moth flies straight into the flame; the careless drinker swallows poison and calls a doctor only when it is too late. Each names the same pattern: trusting what cannot save, and waking to it past the hour of rescue. The urgency is the point. He tells you to settle the matter of your life now, while there is still time, before death's messenger stands at the door. It is a warning aimed at the habit of delay in oneself, not at any particular sinner.

GATHA 2497

Longing and Separation

Longing, demanding one's due from God

मराठी मूळ

द्या जी माझा विचारोनियां विभाग । न खंडे हा लाग आहाचपणें ॥१॥
 किती नेणों तुझां साहाते कटकट । आह्मी च वाईट निवडलों ते ॥२॥
 करवितां कल्लें जिवाचियेसाठीं । हे तुझां वोखटीं ढाळ देवा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे धीर कारण आपुला । तुझीं तों विठ्ठला मायातीत ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Give me my due portion after fair consideration. This persistent longing does not cease by itself.

I do not know how long You can endure this pestering. Perhaps it is I alone who have been found wanting.

You make me quarrel for my very life, yet You find such importuning distasteful, O God. Says Tuka, this patience serves Your own purpose, for You, O Vitthal, are beyond all illusion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Weigh it fairly and give me my share, Lord. This longing will not stop on its own; it will not be shaken off lightly. I do not know how long you can bear my pestering. Perhaps it is only I who have been judged worthless. You make me quarrel for the sake of my own life, and yet such begging is distasteful to you, O God. Tuka says: this patience serves your own purpose. You, Vitthal, are beyond all illusion.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses a claim on God and refuses to pretend the longing is bearable. He asks for his rightful portion, weighed out fairly, because the ache will not cease by itself. He even turns the discomfort on God: it is you who set me quarreling for my life, and you who find this begging unwelcome. But the last turn is trust, not accusation: he reads God's slowness as deliberate, a patience that serves God's own purpose, since Vitthal stands beyond the illusion that fools the rest. The poem holds complaint and faith together, demanding while still bowing.

GATHA 2498

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the One who set it in motion

मराठी मूळ

आमुचे ठाउके तुह्यां गर्भवास । बिळवंत दोष केले भोग ॥१॥
 काय हा सांगावा नसतां नवलावो । मेंदपणें भाव भुलवणेचा ॥२॥
 एका पळवूनि एका पाठी लावा । कवतुक देवा पाहावया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने ज्याणें असें चेतविलें । त्याच्यानें उगळें कैसें नव्हे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You know our sufferings in the womb; our powerful sins have caused the experiences we endure. Why speak of this as though it were some marvel? With trickery You create bewilderment.

You set one running and another chasing, just to watch the spectacle, O God. Says Tuka, the One who set all this in motion surely has the power to undo it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You know our time in the womb; our heavy sins brought on the suffering we bear. Why tell it as if it were some wonder? With your trickery you bewilder our hearts. You set one running and another chasing behind, just to watch the show, O God. Tuka says: the One who lit all this can surely put it out.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays the whole machinery of suffering at God's own feet. The pain of birth and the weight of sin are real, he grants, but they unfold inside a bewilderment that God himself spreads, a trickery that no one should mistake for a marvel. He pictures God as a watcher setting one creature to flee and another to chase, staging the spectacle for his own amusement. The poem's quiet demand is its last line: if you kindled this fire, you have the power to quench it. It hands responsibility back to the One who started the game, and asks him to end it.

GATHA 2499

Longing and Separation

Longing, pleading with the silent Lord

मराठी मूळ

निदनयासी तुझी करितां दंडण । तुमचें गांहाणें कोठें द्यावें ॥१॥
 भाकितों करुणा ऐकती कान । उगलें चि मौन्य धरिलें ऐसें ॥२॥
 दीनपणें पाहें पाय भिडावोनि । मंजुळा वचनीं विनवीतसें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे गांठी मनाची उकला । काय जी विठ्ठला पाहातसां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You punish the innocent, and to whom shall I take my complaint against You? I cry out for mercy; my ears hear, but You maintain a stony silence. I gaze at Your feet with humility, and I entreat You in gentle words.

Says Tuka, untie the knot of Your chitta. What are You waiting for, O Vitthal?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You punish the innocent; where am I to take my complaint against you? I cry out for mercy. Ears hear me, and yet you keep this stubborn silence. Humbly I gaze at your feet and press close; in soft words I keep on begging. Tuka says: loosen the knot in your heart. What are you waiting for, O Vitthal?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram stands before a God who will not answer and names the bind directly: if the judge himself wrongs you, there is no higher court to appeal to. He has done everything a suppliant can, crying for mercy, clinging to the feet, pleading in gentle words, and still meets a silence he calls stubborn. The closing line is part rebuke, part plea: untie the knot in your own heart, the withholding is yours, not mine. He does not abandon the door; he keeps knocking and asks, simply, what God is waiting for. The poem is the patience of love that refuses to be turned away.

GATHA 2500

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, the face that glows with grace

मराठी मूळ

नसतों किविलवाणें । कांहीं तुमच्या कृपादानें ॥१॥
 हे चि तयाची ओळखी । धालें टवटवित मुखीं ॥२॥
 वायां जात नाहीं । वचन प्रीतीचें तें कांहीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । सत्य येतें अनुभवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I would not appear so pitiful were it not for Your grace. The mark of Your blessing is this: my face glows with contentment.

A word spoken with love never goes to waste. Says Tuka, O God, this truth comes through direct experience.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I would not be so pitiful but for your gift of grace. This is the sign of it: a face grown bright and content. A word spoken in love is never wasted; nothing of it is lost. Tuka says: O God, this proves true in living experience.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram points to a quiet, visible mark of grace rather than to any argument for it. Whatever poverty or helplessness he still wears, he says it would be worse without God's gift, and the gift shows itself plainly in a face turned bright and content. He adds a small certainty: a word spoken in love goes nowhere to waste. The closing line is the whole ground of the poem, that none of this is theory but something tested and found true in his own experience. It is the calm testimony of a man reporting what he has lived.